

## **Together In Unity**

What an amazing moment this is in the life of WVPC and Onnuri. We have been anticipating this Sunday for a long time, and here we are worshipping together. I am so grateful for what the Holy Spirit has done to make this all possible.

As I told you when I preached at Onnuri there is no doubt in my mind that this partnership is a movement of the Holy Spirit. It is meant to be. So again, welcome and thank you for the life and energy you are bringing to us.

We have been going through the psalms this summer and the psalm I chose for this morning – Psalm 133 that Glenn just read to you – is a psalm about unity. It starts out...

### **How great and pleasant when brothers and sisters dwell together in unity!**

These are ancient words, yet I cant think of anything more timely.

How important it is in a nation now divided and hostile on so many issues – that the church stand together and be unified

In a time of hostility and violence, where divisions threaten to shake us at our very foundations

How important that the church of Jesus Christ be bound together in hope and purpose

Acting with compassion, doing service...across cultures and nationalities....being one spirit

What a witness to a world gone mad

What a witness to those who spurn the gospel and think that faith is passé

This partnership right now is a new 'start up" here in Silicon Valley where start ups are well known...but this one is orchestrated by the Lord...and

We are on the threshold of a new day

We have the opportunity to actually do what many talk of doing at Retreats for Pastors

I have been to many of them...and the message is always

We need to get more diverse;

We need to move out of our comfort zone; we need to worship multi-culturally.

The world is changing and we need a global perspective...

I have heard it a thousand times but rarely does it happen ...And yet here we are!

Too long have we stayed in our own homogenous groups that look like us and think like us

Too long have we let things go along like that

Too long have we missed the richness of collaboration and celebration that comes from being united in Jesus

**It's time to grow**

**It's time to change**

**It's time to collaborate**

It's time to connect in the name of the One who loves us all and longs for us to be united in him

And learn from each other

And when we do this...when we are truly unified and love each other....watch out...the Holy Spirit is gonna move with power.

This kind of unity between diverse people from different nations is how the early church was started.

**The Holy Spirit moved people from all different cultures and languages to speak the truth of the gospel at Pentecost.**

**And thousands came to the Lord.** And healing happened. And people served together, and rejoiced together and the world was changed.

We are meant to be a church of all nations – not just Korean and English but of all nations – look at Cupertino...our communities and neighborhoods here ...

And friends this diversity in the church is not some kind of inconvenience that we must tolerate

**It is God's dream**

And friends we are beginning to live God's dream right here and right now.

It's a dream that was so important to God's heart that it is what Jesus prayed for right before he went to the cross.

**"I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one--as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me" (John 17:21, NLT).**

Unity was in Jesus' heart – the last thing he prayed for – for us – was unity...

Unity is God's deep longing for the church.  
And Jesus prays for it for us why?  
"So that the world will believe..."  
Our Unity is a witness to Christ

Let's go back to psalm 133...  
After this first line that everyone can agree with that we should be unified...psalm  
133 gets a little confusing.

Cause then it goes to Aaron and Mt Hermon.  
What's going on?

**It (Unity) is like the precious oil on the head,  
running down upon the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron,  
running down over the collar of his robes.  
<sup>3</sup> It is like the dew of Hermon,  
which falls on the mountains of Zion.  
For there the LORD ordained his blessing,  
life forevermore.**

Well first of all – in order to understand this - we have know who Aaron was.  
**Aaron was the first high priest of the Israelites.** Probably when he became the  
first high priest he was anointed with precious oil.

**Aaron for us today, symbolizes Jesus, our great high priest who became sin  
for us so that we could experience unity in him.**

And of course the oil running down over the collar and robes indicates the flow  
of grace

When we are unified, under the same high priest – for us Jesus Christ – *that grace  
just spreads*

*You can't stop it...Amazing Grace...how sweet the sound*

The oil for anointing a high priest in OT times was fragrant and they didn't skimp  
on that oil when they anointed – they poured the whole flask of it on  
And that fragrance would fill the room

You can't suppress a beautiful fragrance; you can't suppress unity in the church

It's catching. It's attractive.

It draws people in.

It's exactly what people are longing for – a sense of family, community, and purpose – across differences.

We are beginning to form that today...

Under the powerful name and presence of Jesus Christ our great high priest

AW Tozer has a great example of unity in Jesus Christ - how does that work?

What does that mean?

**Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So one hundred worshipers [meeting] together, each one looking to Jesus Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could possibly be, were they to become 'unity' conscious and turn their eyes away from God to strive for closer fellowship.**

Under Jesus Christ our great high priest we become one in a spiritual body called the church...that is more powerful than any merely human institution.

The psalmist goes on to talk about Mt Hermon...

Mt Hermon (there were two of them) – the one mentioned here – had a reputation for being laden with dew in the morning...

In John Calvins commentary on the psalm he mentions that a friend of his went camping at the base of this mountain and when he woke up his tents were wet with the dew of the morning...it was heavy, sodden, full of moisture...

And the dew would run off the mountain and bring new life to the landscape around it

It was lush, and green and full of life – in a generally dry area

That's what unity in Christ does- it brings life – it brings life to and joy, and beauty, and quenches the thirst we all have for belonging...

Finally...I believe Aaron is mentioned here in this psalm also because

## **Aaron as High Priest was a spokesperson for Moses**

We think Moses may have had a speech impediment  
We don't know for sure

That's why he pushes back when God appears to him in the burning bush and says "Go speak to Pharaoh and say 'Let my people go'"  
Moses says....NO. Not me. Choose someone else....  
He eventually went but we see in scripture that...

Aaron would occasionally step in and speak for Moses  
Help him out. Give him a break...

Another time Moses had to keep his hands in the air to indicate a message from the Lord to the people  
And Moses' hands grew weary of being held up for so long  
**Aaron came along, put his hands on Moses' arms and kept them lifted up...**

Ministry is hard folks. It really is. It never ends.  
As rewarding and eternal as it is, it can be very hard  
We need each other

We need to come alongside each other and hold up one another  
Encourage each other  
We are stronger when we are together...and we can accomplish so much more.



Every so often I hear about one of these! This is a horse pulling contest.

I had to put a horse in this talk today because I want those of you who don't know me yet to get to know me.

I love horses.

In Canada they had a horse pulling contest recently where the winner actually was able to pull 9,000 pounds.

The runner up was able to pull 8,000 pounds.

Pretty impressive!

Then someone had the great idea to put these two horses, the runner up and the winner together – hitch them both to the flatbed - and see how many pounds the two of them could pull together.



How many pounds do you think the two of them could pull, harnessed together?

Let's take some guesses from you today – logically you might say 17,000 pounds right? That would make sense.

What do you think. How many pounds? (guesses)

**Together the two horses pulled 31,000 pounds!!**

**Three times the weight of what one horse could do alone.** Mathematically it doesn't make sense. But spiritually speaking it makes all the sense in the world.

Together we are better.

We can do so much more together than we can alone.

The scripture is full of that message...

And psalm 133 declares it

How wonderful it is when kinsfolk – brothers and sisters – God’s people - dwell together in unity!

**Doing faith together is God’s dream. It is the church. It is a replica of the kingdom of God.**

We need each other.

And God has brought us together under Christ our great high priest - on this day to live his dream - to be unified, and to work together to spread his good news like fragrant oil overflowing, like dew from the mountains – bringing life and healing, and refreshment to others.

I want you to turn to the person next to you and tell them **You are my brother or sister in Christ Jesus**. Would you do that right now?

And if you are sitting next to your biological brother or sister find someone else, okay? Help me make the point...

I want to leave you today with a sense of expectation and excitement about what God is going to do here in our midst unified in him...

In a moment we are going to sing the song LORD MAKE US ONE...it is a great song. As we sing in a moment... I would like you to join hands together across the aisle...if you are sitting alone move into the group...hold someones hand...connect up

Do you know what the largest living organism by mass is thought to be?

It's an aspen grove



and it is called "**The Trembling Giant**"  
And it grows in south-central Utah.

In 2006 a stamp was made of this cluster of Aspen trees and it was named one of the forty "Wonders America"

Why?

Well from the picture it looks like a bunch of separate trees growing together doesn't it?

Not anything like a wonder of America...pretty normal picture  
Looks like a backyard I once had.

Just like here.

It looks as if we are a bunch of separate people sitting in a sanctuary.  
Do you know what makes this grove of aspens a wonder...a trembling giant...

**Each tree shares the exact same root.**

And during intense fires, that would normally destroy this grove of trees, the organism survives underground with its root system that is shared by all...sending up new stems in the aftermath of each fire it endures.

With that in mind, Lets stand now and join hands...standing together as one body..committed to our unity in Christ who is our common root...our high priest...our Lord...committed to being the church together cross culturally, across age and stage, across divisions that torment our world;

May we be the church...unified no matter what comes....a wonder in our community....living God's dream for the kingdom.



Here is John 17:21 again – Jesus' prayer for us before he went to the cross. Let's read it together...

**"I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one--as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me" (John 17:21, NLT).**