

Short Talk

(SHT153)

Unity in the church family is vital

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “Unity in the church family is vital”

- Aim of Short talk:** To teach that unity in the church family is vital to our mission in the world and to encourage people to prefer one another.
- Use of Short talk:** This is a short All Age talk picking out one issue from the Lectionary Gospel reading of the Sunday main service. The talk stands alone and assumes that the Gospel Bible reading may not yet have been read to the congregation. It could be used for example, for the whole congregation before the children go out to their age specific groups, leaving the adults with a full sermon later.
- Main themes:** Unity, Mission, Community
- Biblical references:** John 17:20-26
- Lectionary:** Year C – The 7th Sunday of Easter
- Props:** You will need a table and the following:
- 1) Ten red toy building bricks split equally between two bags.
 - 2) Ten green toy building bricks split equally between two bags.
 - 3) Ten blue toy building bricks split equally between two bags.
- The bricks can be wooden ones, or large “Mega-blocks,” or large pieces of “Duplo,” or if you don’t have anything else, a few hassocks of 3 different colours!
- Before the Service:** You need three volunteers who are happy to act and have a bit of fun “adlibbing” the building of a couple of towers. You will need to brief them before the service explaining what you want them to do.

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Would my three volunteers like to come forward now? *(Receive volunteers and stand them around the table. Give each person a bag of bricks)*

- I have given each of you a bag of bricks and the task today is to build a tower. You have one minute to do that starting from now.

(Volunteers open their bags and say the following:)

- “I’ve got my favourite coloured bricks – I love red.”
- “I’ve got my favourite coloured bricks too – I love blue”
- “I’ve got my favourite coloured bricks too – I love green”

[To work well, the volunteers need to “adlib” as they build the tower. The following words are an example of the sort of things that people could say. The idea is that the 3 people argue about building the tower with the result that someone goes and builds their own little tower and someone else in anger knocks the main tower down]

“I’m going to put my brick down first for the base of the tower”

“I think blue works best as the base”

“It’s obvious it should be green.” *(Person puts green brick down on the table)*

“Well the next brick is red.” *(Person puts red brick on top of the green one)*

“That’s ridiculous, blue looks much better.” *(Person removes red brick and puts their blue brick on top of the green one)*

“You’re right, green and blue look much better together.” *(Person puts green brick on top of the blue brick)*

“And another one.” *(Person puts blue brick on top of the green brick)*

“That’s not fair. You’ve both put down two of your bricks and I haven’t put down one yet” *(Person puts 2 red bricks on top of the blue brick)*

“That just looks stupid.” *(Person removes red bricks)*

“Who is stupid eh? Well I’m not putting up with this any longer. I’m going to build my own tower.” ***(Person walks away and starts to build a tower on the floor)***

“Honestly they are so sensitive. We can manage without them.” *(Person puts two blue bricks in place)*

“You’re just put two of your bricks in place.”

“And?”

“It doesn’t work”

“Well I like it and that’s what matters”

“My bricks look better than yours.”

“No, they don’t”

“Yes, they do.... oh, this is pathetic!” ***(Person knocks the tower over and walks off)***

Well that didn’t go well did it?

- They haven’t managed to build the tower that I asked them to build, although there seems to be a mini tower been built over there. *(Clear away the bricks from the table)*
- Shall we try again?

Would my three volunteers like to come around the table again? *(Receive volunteers and stand them around the table. Give each person a bag of bricks)*

- I have given each of you a bag of bricks and the task today is to build a tower. You have one minute to do that starting from now.

(Volunteers open their bags and say the following:)

- “I’ve got my favourite coloured bricks – I love red.”
- “I’ve got my favourite coloured bricks too – I love blue”
- “I’ve got my favourite coloured bricks too – I love green”

[To work well, the volunteers need to “adlib” as they build the tower. The following words are an example of the sort of things that people could say. The idea is that the 3 people prefer one another and build a tower effectively]

“I think that blue would be a good colour for the base.”

“I agree.” *(Person with blue brick puts their 1st brick onto the table)*

“How about red next?”

“That would look great.” *(Person with red brick puts their brick onto the blue one)*

“I think that two or three green ones would work well next”

“Absolutely.” *(Person with green bricks puts 2 bricks onto the red one)*

“Go on. Put on another one.” (Person with green bricks adds another green brick)

“How about a couple of red bricks next?”

“Great idea.” (Person with red bricks puts 2 bricks onto the green one)

“How about a blue brick next” (Person with blue bricks puts brick onto the red one)

“This is looking great. Let’s have a couple more red bricks.” (Person with red bricks puts 2 bricks onto the blue one)

“We seem a little short of blue bricks. I think that you should put down 3 of yours now.”
(Person with blue bricks puts 3 bricks onto the red one)

“And to finish off our tower let’s put on 2 more beautiful green bricks.” (Person with green bricks puts 2 bricks onto the green one)

Thank you – you have managed to build a beautiful tower for us.

Now I want you to all imagine that what you have just seen today are two different church families working in two different ways.

- In the first church family the people were just thinking about themselves weren’t they and what they wanted?
- In the second church family the people were putting each other first.

I wonder which church family you would rather be part of;

- the 1st one or the 2nd one?

Many of us are praying this week for our family and friends to come to know Jesus for themselves, as part of the “Thy Kingdom Come¹” global wave of prayer.

- Which church family do you think that our friends and family are more likely to want to be a part of? (Receive responses)

The type of church family that Jesus wants us to be is obvious isn’t it?

- Just before Jesus died, He prayed these words: “I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, **that all of them may be one**, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.” (John 17:20-21 NIV)

Jesus’ prayer is that you and I are one because when we are united, our church family brings glory to God and it is also attractive to people outside.

Now we don’t often build brick towers together as a church family, but we do work together and be together in all sorts of other ways.

- So next time you are either meeting with other Christians or doing something alongside another Christian, remember what you have seen today with the brick building.
- Honour the other person in the way that you speak to them and the way that you act.

Our unity will not only bring glory to Jesus, but people will also believe us when we tell them that Jesus is Lord, because they will see a church family that lives as if they believe it.

¹ You can find more information about the global “Thy kingdom Come” prayer initiative here:

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

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