

The Blessing of Unity

Goldstone Church Anniversary Sunday – 07-Sep-25 10:30am

Psalm 133:1-3

Introduction

At a time when our society seems to be full of disputes, discord, and disagreements, Psalm 133 is a psalm that is overflowing with unity and harmony. This psalm praises spiritual unity among God's people.

The phrase, "*A song of ascents*" is part of the original Hebrew Bible. In Bible times, all Jewish men were expected to travel to Jerusalem to regularly celebrate several religious festivals. As they travelled up to Jerusalem, Psalm 133 was a psalm that the pilgrims would sing or say as they ascended to the capital city.

The journeys to Jerusalem would have been a great reunion. Often it was the only time when tribes from different parts of the country would have seen each other and worshipped together. Some Bible commentators estimate that an additional 2 million people would have been squeezed into the narrow streets in Jerusalem for these festivals.

It is easy to imagine King David, the author of the psalm, looking out over these thousands of people noticing that, despite their differences, they all expressed one common characteristic – Unity. They were united as they came to worship God.

1. The PRINCIPLE of Unity (Psalm 133:1)

"Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" (Psalm 133:1 ESV).

Some Bible versions omit the first word in the psalm: "Behold". This word is important as it adds an extra emphasis to what is happening. David is saying, Look! This is something extraordinary. Behold, this unity among God's people is astonishing.

David explained that this Christian unity has two key characteristics:

a) Unity is Wonderful.

The Hebrew word translated 'good' means "God is good". It refers to the goodness, purity, and the wholesomeness of God.

When God's People show Christian Unity, they are expressing a Godly characteristic.

Christian unity, honours and pleases God because it reflects God's person and character.

b) Unity is Pleasant.

The word translated 'pleasant' is referring to a joyful, human activity. Christian Unity is humanly fun, enjoyable, and something that makes people happy.

When God's people come together in Christian Unity, it is a good use of our time.

King David saw that God's people were expressing God's love to one another. This love was Wonderful from God's perspective and Pleasant from a Human point of view.

A lawyer asked Jesus what the Greatest Commandment was. *"Jesus replied, "'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."* (Matthew 22:37-40 NLT).

Later, Jesus said to His disciples, *"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."* (John 13:34-35 NLT).

These verses show that love is:

- The fulfilment of God's holy Law,

- The proof that we are followers of Jesus, and
- Visibly expressed through Christian Unity.

When we meet, we express our love for God as we express our love for each other. The two expressions of love go together.

As we rejoice together, let us celebrate our Unity in Jesus. *“There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.”* (Galatians 3:28 NLT).

Let us seek an ever-growing personal relationship with Jesus, our Saviour and our Lord.

2. The PARABLES of Unity (Psalm 133:2-3A)

The psalm provides parables / pictures of what Christian Unity is like.

a) Unity is like Anointing Oil.

“For harmony is as precious as the anointing oil that was poured over Aaron’s head, that ran down his beard and onto the border of his robe.” (Psalm 133:2 NLT).

When Aaron carried out his duties as a priest in the tabernacle, he started by putting on his special robes. But he was not fully ready to work until the special anointing oil had been poured out on him (Exodus 29:21). Without the oil, Aaron could not serve God.

David used this Anointing Oil as a picture of what Love is like among God’s people.

1) The Oil was *Holy*.

The oil set Aaron apart as God’s holy servant. In the same way, Christian love sets us apart from the world (John 13:35).

2) The Oil was *Sweet*.

The ingredients of the oil (Exodus 30:23-25) indicate that it would have had a sweet-smelling aroma. Similarly, our Christian love for one another is sweet, precious, and fragrant.

3) The Oil was *Unique*.

The oil could not be used for any other purpose (Exodus 30:32-33). No-one else was eligible to wear this oil. Non-Christians are longing to copy the Love that God’s people show to one another. They cannot do this because to show and share this true Love from God, needs a personal relationship with Jesus. The two go together.

4) The Oil was *Sanctifying*.

The priests were not allowed to go into the Tabernacle until they had been anointed with the oil. It qualified them before God. Similarly, as Christians, our Love for one another sets us apart for a relationship with God.

Christianity claims that the God of Creation became a human, lived among us, died, and rose again from the grave. Jesus, the virgin-born, God-man promises heaven to anyone who asks and believes in Him. This ultimate claim is proclaimed to the world when we visibly show God’s love to one another.

b) Unity is like Refreshing Dew.

“Harmony is as refreshing as the dew from Mount Hermon that falls on the mountains of Zion.” (Psalm 133:3a NLT).

David used morning dew as a picture of what Love is like among God’s people.

1) Dew is *Life-Giving*.

Plants burst into life when dew falls. In the same way, when Christian Love is expressed, there is a fresh, new life that comes from God (1 John 3:14).

2) Dew is *Beautiful*.

Dew sparkles in the morning light. Similarly, when God’s Love covers God’s people,

they sparkle and express great beauty that the world cannot fail to see.

3) Dew is *Refreshing*.

Dew doesn't just give life; it regularly revives and invigorates it. Similarly, Christian love refreshes life and fights off the virus of loneliness. When we have fellowship with one another, we encourage each other in our Christian lives.

4) Dew is *Impartial*.

The dew fell on the impressive and well-known Mount Hermon, as well as falling on the anonymous and unnamed hills in Zion. In other words, God's Love is for everyone

(Galatians 3:26).

As we rejoice together, how would we describe our Love for God? What about our Love for one another? God's love for us is: Life-Giving, Beautiful, Refreshing, and Impartial.

As Christians, let us seek to reflect His love, to our friends, families, and our community.

3. The PURPOSE of Unity (Psalm 133:3B)

"And there the Lord has pronounced his blessing, even life everlasting." (Psalm 133:3b NLT).

David explained why God's blessing and love comes down on His people.

The word translated "pronounced" should say 'commanded'. *"The Lord has commanded his blessing, even life everlasting."* God has all the authority in the universe, so He commands that His endless and everlasting blessing be poured out onto His people.

Three times this psalm refers to "coming down". It is "coming down" Aaron's beard, the edge of his robes (v.2), and the dew is "coming down" (v.3). This is an action-image of God's Love and blessing "coming down" on His people.

As we celebrate today, let us remember that God's love is a precious gift from God that is 'coming down' to us from God's presence. This is the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives that is filling us up and overflowing into our families, friends, and our community.

CONCLUSION

As we start a new year as Goldstone Church, our challenge is to prayerfully reflect and to live out the Love of God that He has given to us.

So, let us:

- Be the Holy Oil to the world around us.
- Shine like the Morning Dew.
- Live in the confidence of the Power of God's presence and blessing in our lives.

Motto Verse for 2025

"But you are a chosen people... that you may declare the praises of Him who called you."

(1 Peter 2:9 NIV)

AMEN