

Well, good morning, everyone. Welcome to Valley Creek. We are one church that meets in multiple campuses and we carry the hope of Jesus to thousands of locations. Let's do this. Let's all welcome each other together from wherever you are. Maybe you're in Denton, maybe you're in Flower Mound, Gainesville, Lewisville, The Venue, somewhere in the world online. Welcome each other together. My name is Justin, and I get to serve as the campus pastor at our Denton campus. It's great to be with you today. If you're new, if it's your first time, then thanks for hanging out with us. We love having you. You're welcome here anytime at all. We've been in a series called Kingdom Culture 101 - Learning to Live a Life of Values. Every week, we've been unpacking the values that build and create that kingdom culture because we're wanting to grow that in our church and in our lives.

Last week, we talked about unity. We said we pursue unity with everything we have. Because the anointing of God is found in unity. Here's what we're doing today. We're going to put that on display. Today is going to look a little bit different. Normally, right now, whatever campus that you're at, your campus pastor would be up and they would be welcoming you right now. The worship team would be on the platform at your campus getting ready to lead you into the presence of God. But today, we've pooled that all together and we've got the worship leaders from every campus are here to lead us in unity. We've got the campus pastors, from every campus, are all here together to lead us in unity. We're going to practice unity together. It's going to look different. We're going to flow in and out, we're going to worship, and then one of the campus pastors will come up and lead us through responding. We'll go back and forth with that. We're going to have some opportunities throughout.

We're just going to give prompts to respond to the Lord. This is us putting a prophetic picture on display of how we are one church that meets in multiple campuses, that carries the hope of Jesus to thousands of locations. Lean in today and engage. Let's meet with God today because God is here to meet with us. Let's take hold of this passage, Romans 15:5-6 says, "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves, as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ. " Let's do this, would you just close your eyes? Let's pray this prayer together, a simple prayer. "Lord, would you help me practice unity?"

Let's pray that again, "Lord, would you help me practice unity?" Because Lord, with one mind, we set it on You; with one heart, we turn towards You; with one voice, we glorify You, Lord Jesus. Amen!

Right now, across all of our campuses, we get to join together as we practice our kingdom value of pursuing God with everything we have. If you're just joining us, we are glad that you're here. I am so excited to be here. You see, we've got all of our campus pastors, all of our worship leaders together under one roof. Yes, a sign of unity, because we are one church unified together. Remember, we said that unity is not about you and I agreeing together or even that my cause lines up with your cause. We said the kingdom unity is when we agree with

what God says is true. We have this great illustration that shows the difference between a disunified culture and a unified culture.

When you look up there, and you look at the box on the left, that just looks like chaos. You see, every single one of those arrows represents a person moving in different directions, different opinions, or preferences or agendas. That's just an exhausting way to live. But if we're honest, our lives probably look like that more than we would like to admit, but God invites us to so much more. You see, He invites us into a culture of unity. That's the box on the right. All the arrows moving in the same direction, all the people moving towards what God says is true. When we do that, there is so much power in that. It's like a bunch of smaller streams coming together to form one roaring river that carves through the landscape and actually changes the atmosphere, wherever it goes. That's what kingdom unity does. That's what I want in my life. That's what I want for your life. That's what I want for our church.

Here's what we're going to do right now. We're going to just take some time, wherever you're at, to just invite the Holy Spirit into our lives. You see, we're going to focus on four areas of life. We just want to ask the Holy Spirit, where we need to pursue unity with our whole heart. I want to start with our parents. You see in Deuteronomy, it says, "Honor your father and mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with yourself." Ask the Holy Spirit right now, what would it look like to honor your father and mother? Where is God asking you to submit and surrender to them?

Where can you unify and pursue unity at home? Holy Spirit, we just ask for your help in pursuing unity and to honor our parents. Next, we want to look at marriage. Matthew 19 says, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh... so they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate." Come on, let me ask you, what's the Holy Spirit say about pursuing unity in your marriage?

Where's the Holy Spirit inviting you to die to yourself so that you can love your spouse? What does it look like to pursue unity in your marriage? Holy Spirit, come and help us be unified in our marriages.

We have two more places that the Holy Spirit is inviting us to pursue unity. The next one is with leaders in our life. Romans 13 says this, "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God."

The question of processing right now with the Holy Spirit, what does that look like for you to submit to the leaders that God has placed in your life? The coaches, the teachers, that team leader, that boss, what does that look like? Can you ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to surrender your strength to the authority in your life? As you do that, you're not just

surrendering to them, you're surrendering it to Jesus Himself. One more area. We're called to pursue unity within our church.

It says in Ephesians 4, "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit." We're called to be gentle and patient. Do you do that in the relationships here in this church? Do you exhibit the fruit of patience and gentleness? Are you pursuing unity with everything you have here? As you respond to the Holy Spirit, is he highlighting for you a person you need to forgive? Is there somebody you need to apologize to or an offense you need to let go?

That is pursuing unity. Jesus, we want to be a church that pursues unity with everything we have. We choose, today, to pursue unity with our whole hearts.

We are practicing the value of unity. What better way to demonstrate it than to read and declare out the scriptures of John 17 together. You see, this is Jesus' prayer at the end of His life. It's significant, because it's His last words to us.

It's a prayer that we get to answer. So come on, wherever you're at across all of our campuses, would you raise your voice, raise your faith. Let's read and declare this out together right now. "My prayer is not for them alone. 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. May they also be in us, so that the world may believe that You have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in Me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that You sent me and have loved them even as You have loved me."

That's Jesus' prayer and His desire for us that we would pursue unity with everything we have. What we want to do today is take a moment to pray for our church, to take this prayer and put it in our heart and speak it out in a prophetic display to pray that our church would be one, that our church would be unified, that we would believe one another, we would forgive one another, we would bless one another. Come on, wherever you're at, can you lift your faith? Can you lift your voices, lift your prayers that declare that we would be one.

Another part of Jesus' prayer is that the world would -- we would be known by our love and because of that, the world would come to believe in Jesus. The lost, the lonely, the broken - that they would look at our lives as a people and as a faith community and say that, I want to -- I want part of that because of their love. Come on, let's pray for that. Let's pray for the lost, let's pray for our unity, let's pray that we would be a church known by our love.

Jesus, we just come humbly before You as a people to say, we can't make unity happen on our own. We say, Holy Spirit, would You fill us afresh with Yourself because You're the great unifier? We need You, oh God, to help us be the people that You've dreamed of.

To the Lord, we just say, maybe we do not like the idea of unity in theory but, we would actually believe in it, know that we need it, we are desperate for it, that we would walk in and pursue it, oh God. Lord, I pray that You would help us be a people that aren't unaware of the enemy's schemes. He comes to steal, kill, and destroy and his biggest game plan is to create division and chaos. Lord, I pray as a people that we would take authority over division in this house, that we would not let it stand, we would see it out, we would see when people want to maybe -- just have it on their spirits to like, I want to come against or divide or have -- just something that's opposed to us or anything. And may take authority over that, and may we use Your grace, may we use Your kindness and Your love, and Jesus we just come to You as a people to say that we are with You heart, mind, and soul in Jesus' name.

That's our prayer, that's our heart, making space for Jesus to do what only He can do. Whatever you want to do Jesus, we're open to that. Whatever you -- however You want to have Your way, Your word, Your wisdom in our life, we're open-hearted to that. Even now, Lord, we just opened ourselves up to how Your Spirit wants to move. Why don't you go ahead and find your seats for me. Wherever you're at, grab a seat for a moment. I just want to take a second and remind us that when Jesus was on earth, He had a physical body.

He walked in that body, and He ate food to that body, and He had relationships with his disciples in that body. He walked around and did miracles with people in that body, and He experienced all the things that are common to us, as people, in that body. Then when He went to the cross, that body was damaged. It was bruised, it was pierced. The body was beaten. It was torn. It was whipped. The body died. Then, it was raised to new life. Death couldn't hold Him back. He was resurrected. He showed us that there was a power over the grave and over death that His life could overcome even the darkest of things, the darkest of the world had to offer - the brokenness and death and hurting, and sickness.

He overcame it all through His resurrection. He came back to us with a resurrected body. He spoke to us about what it was going to be like in his forever kingdom. He gave us a really clear picture that we had a job in front of us, that we were going to be that body, we were going to make those disciples, and then He went up to heaven, where He's seated at the right hand of the Father. But here's the thing. Jesus still has a body on this earth - it's called the church. He still has a body. He still has a people. He still has a place, here, among us, just as a body, though one has many parts but all the many parts form one body; so it is with Christ.

It goes on in 1 Corinthians 11, to say, "God has put the body together. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." When we pursue unity with everything we have, we are being that body. Let's just be really clear. Jesus didn't give us unity as a body, so that we could tear His body apart again. He didn't bring us together as one, so that we could spend time doing the very thing that's already happened to Him - broken, pierced, crushed, bruised,

torn. Today, as a sign of the oneness, in all of our campuses, as us being the body, we're going to choose to take communion. All our teams can begin to come forward right now. Because we can't think of a better way to display unity, which is what we're doing, by the way, across all of our campuses, all of our locations.

This is the church. This is what it is to be one. Jesus' prayer, "That they would be one as I as the Father are one." We're getting to put that on full display today. Communion is just a sign of all that Jesus is and all that Jesus did. Anybody who follows Jesus as Lord is free to take communion, here, at Valley Creek. We welcome you to do that. Because every time we do, we get to be reminded of that body that remains, that church that Jesus left on this earth to display unity, to display His love for the Father, the Father's love for Him, their love for the Spirit, the unity that is within the Godhead. You see, part of what happens when you think about Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is you realize that God is actually in perfect unity with Himself and He invites us to be the very same within His church.

I was really struck when I was reading from the Old Testament. There's a prophetic word that reminds us of what Jesus did. It says that, "He had no beauty that we should esteem Him." He literally was made ugly in those moments of the cross. "He was pierced for our sins. He was bruised and crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brings us peace was upon Him." Communion is a reminder of that. There was a punishment that was paid by Him with His body so that our body could experience peace. There was a life that was lost by Him when He was on earth, by Jesus so that we could now have His life among us, be His people of life, be His church. Can I just ask you, is there any part of your life that you're tearing the body of Jesus?

Is there any part of your thoughts or your relationships where His body is literally being ripped apart again? Because it already happened once, it doesn't need to happen now. It's what He experienced that time - so, wholeness, healing, oneness can happen this time, right now, among His church. What about you? Are you the part of the body that feels like you're disconnected? Because the invitation is to be made whole in Jesus' name. The invitation is to realize that you are part of this body, you're part of this completeness, you're part of this unity, the unity of the Spirit, the bond of peace that Jesus gives us. He's inviting each one of us to remember who we are - not insignificant, not just on the outside, on the inside; part of His body made whole in Jesus' name - unified by the power and the blood of Jesus.

Communion reminds us of that. When we take the bread, Jesus told us this bread is like my body that is it's going to be broken, so that this body can be made whole. It's going to be damaged, torn, pierced, ripped, hurt, broken, sick, so that this body could be freed, healthy, alive, whole, one in unity. Every time we take this, we do it in remembrance of Jesus. Let's take the bread together. I'm going to share one thought real quick from that.

I believe that as you engage communion by faith right now, as we engage it as a church together, that you literally just got healed in Jesus' name. Do you have a sickness in your body?

Do you have a brokenness of mind? Do you have damage in your relationships in your family? Right now, as an act of faith, I believe you're being healed by His body and by His blood. In the same way, He took the cup and He said, "This cup is a cup of a new covenant between God and man, a new promise, a new agreement that this is going to be like My blood spilt for you, that this blood will be shed so that you can have the full forgiveness of sins, a completeness inside of you. This blood will be shed so the blood within the people of God doesn't have to be." So that we don't have to wound each other, damage each other; we can live in the reality of the fullness of the forgiveness of Jesus. "Every time you take up this cup, do it in remembrance of Me."

Jesus, may we do exactly that and remember You and Your body that was broken so that we can be made whole. Thank You for your church. Thank You for unity. Thank You for a chance to be the very thing You prayed for on earth as it is in heaven. We declare that unity glorifies, unity makes things on earth as it is in heaven, every time we unify Your kingdom has come and Your will is done. We declare that over all of Valley Creek right now, may there be unity of Your body, may we truly answer Your prayer, may we be a people who really, really, really honor what You have done and the sacrifice You made, in Jesus' name.

Why do we do this today? Because we deeply value unity. Because when we unify, God is glorified and his kingdom is released. We pursue unity with everything we have - the anointing of God comes. The supernatural power of God comes over everything and everyone. Wherever you are, whatever campus you're at, whatever seat you're in, wherever you are in the world - in your car, your favorite chair, when we unify, the anointing of God comes over you and me.

This was church. We just had church and it was great. You see, we really do want to meet with God. We really do want to see God come and do what only He can do. We really do want to become more like Jesus. This is who we are. This is what we do. This is the culture of the kingdom that we want to have and I love it. I'm so grateful for it. If you need prayer for anything today, the prayer teams are going to be available. They're going to come into the front at every campus. They are available online. Anything, any prayer, we're going to pray with you, we're going to pray for you. If you like to give today -- here's the thing about giving. Giving is one of the ways that we unify with God - our hearts and our lives.

We unify with His kingdom and with the movement of hope that He's invited us to become. If you'd like to give, you give at any of the boxes on the way out or you can give online, but let's do this for, before we're done. Let's declare these four core truths in unity together. That God is good. Jesus has forgiven me. I am loved, and everything is possible. I love you guys. Have a great week.