

“Joy In The Everyday: One Goal In Common”

Growth Group Guide

September 20, 2026

WELCOME *(Connecting with each other)*

Tell a story of a time when you had something in common with others. Could you be uniquely yourself with them? Why or why not? Briefly discuss what makes Christians joyfully authentic people but still have one goal.

WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER *(Connecting with God)*

Open in prayer inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion. Praise God! We are IN Jesus, can be joyfully authentic, and still unified.

1 Peter 3:8 (ESV) Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.

1 Thessalonians 1:4 (ESV) For we know, brothers [and sisters] loved by God, that he has chosen you.

Ephesians 3:21 (ESV) ...to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

WORD *(Letting God speak to us)*

1. Uniformity means to be exactly the same. Why do you think when we talk about unity many times we're really describing uniformity? (Hint: The Judaizers and their agenda may help.) Why have we let the uniformity mindset of the Judaizers still hang around churches today?
2. Unity means to be united as a whole. **Read Galatians 3:28 and Ephesians 4:3.** What do you learn about unity from these verses? How does being IN Jesus help us think clearly when it comes to unity?
3. **Read Philippians 3:15-16.** Paul begins by speak to those who are mature. As Christians, our spiritual maturity isn't about our physical age or the years we've been a Christian. It's about dependence on Jesus. Does this differ from what you've thought? If so, how?
4. How might we approach spiritual growth and maturity differently knowing it's based on dependence?
5. Paul next encourages everyone to adopt the attitude of making their only goal Jesus and growing in Him. Why is this one of the best things Christians can be encouraged to do? Why is it important to understand that this goal isn't what unites us, being IN Jesus is what unites us? What might happen in our relationships if we get this wrong?
6. On the flip side, if we get this right, knowing our unity comes from being IN Jesus, and we each are focus on the goal of Him and growing in Him, what benefits might we experience and enjoy?
7. Paul didn't feel the need to convince people their thinking was off on this. He trusted God because he knew He was able to show, correct, and mature His kids. How does this help encourage unity and dissuade uniformity? As it relates to this, how could we pray for each other?

8. How does knowing we're in different stages of spiritual development helps us with our unity with brothers and sisters in Jesus? How might we encourage and be encouraged to seek God in the level we are at?
9. Paul encourages us to hold true to what we've already gained in our walk with Jesus. Why do you think this is important in what we've discussed? How does this help us personally and how are we able to help other Christians without walking their walk for them?

WALK *(Living out God's purposes)*

- ✓ **One Big Idea:** When our only goal in life is Jesus and growing in Him, we will operate in unity with others who share the same goal. If we're in the Christian race and running it, it means we've given ourselves to Jesus, we are IN Him, and we are in unity with other Christians. To enjoy that unity we keep Jesus and growing in Him as our only goal. Using the runner's analogy, this is being on the right track and in the right lane. Paul encourages us to stay there and not drift from it, keep progressing, keep building on what has allowed us to grow up in Jesus already. This week in your time with God, you might talk to Him about 1) Growing in Him to experience the unity you have with a fellow "difficult" Christian, 2) Leaning in to relationship with Him if you feel a "drift" happening, or 3) Enjoying Jesus and unity with another joyfully authentic fellow Christian.

WORLD *(Embracing God's heart for others)*

[For the safety of our missionary,
please do not post this update on the internet.]

Life is full for our missionary in Turkey. Their team has been delivering Bibles, school supplies, diapers (baby and adult), toys, and shoes to several churches and local members of their community. God continues to open doors for these gifts of love and truth. One special connection is with the "Local Official" in a downtown neighborhood. What started out as an avenue to deliver fresh bread to the local bread line managed by this official, has expanded to a wheelchair, baby cradle, diapers, and school supplies. His slogan is, "When the children smile, the whole world smiles." Pray these school supplies will be a blessing to the whole neighborhood. Also, in their own neighborhood, they have been delivering fresh apricots and nectarines from their own fruit trees. Angle, the young girl we've been invited to pray for, for healing from her cancer, was able to join in the harvesting! Please keep praying for her healing, in Jesus Name, and for her family to turn their hearts to Him. Another day the team invited refugee friends and kids from the area to choose their favorite colored backpack for the new school year. May this school year be peaceful and successful for all. Pray for all the people hearing about Jesus through these donations and conversations that they will seek God and know Him as Savior. (September 2026 Newsletter)

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