

## THE POWER OF BELONGING

*Bonded*

Reference: **John 13:35**

Pastor Daniel Flynn

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bond·ed /'bændəd/ adjective

1. (of a thing) joined securely to another thing, especially by an adhesive, a heat process, or pressure.
2. (of a person or company) bound by a legal agreement.

**Daniel's Definition:** "We are a body of believers securely joined to each other, by an adhesive called love, in the context of a local body of believers, in our case, called Shadow Mountain Church."

The world will know if we are true Christians or not by the way we act toward one another!

### I. What Unity Is:

A. Two main reasons that a young sports team becomes dominate:

1. INVALID - On some teams, there is a naturally gifted, very athletic, and most of the time, blessed with good genes athlete on the team.
2. VALID - The team of athletes working as a team makes them amazing i.e. encouraging one another, celebrating one another, complimenting each other's abilities!

B. Paul was focused on unity in the letter to the Ephesians.

Reference: **Ephesians 1:15-16**

Paul was thankful for:

1. Their faith in the Lord Jesus and
2. Their love toward all the saints

C. Reference: **Ephesians 4:1-3**

1. We all have a responsibility as a church member to be a source of unity.
2. When we seek unity, we demonstrate love.

Reference: **Colossians 3:14**

### II. Death of unity is most often due to THIS!

Reference: **Romans 1:29-31; James 3:6**

- A. Right in the middle of this list is that evil deed of gossip! Some dictionaries will call it "idle talk", others connect it to rumors and others say it is unproven personal or private

information about others. **Gossip is bad.**

B. How do we respond to gossip in the church?

1. Don't be a source of gossip! If you have a question if something is gossip, do not mention or repeat it!
2. If someone shares with you, gently rebuke them! Kindly tell them you don't want to be a part.
3. **1 Peter 3:10**
4. Stop the gossip. Be a unifier! Let us be known by our LOVE!

### III. Forgiveness, Unity...

A. Unity in the church will not happen if members have unforgiving hearts.

Reference: **Matthew 6:14-15**

B. Forgiveness is the supreme example.

Reference: **Colossians 3:12-13**

Conclusion:

- A. Maybe you need to apologize to someone that God has brought to your hearts attention.
- B. Maybe you need to pray for someone who has hurt you.
- C. Maybe you need to correct a situation you are aware of out of love for them and our church.
- D. Maybe we need to pray for continued unity.
- E. Maybe you need to accept the forgiveness that is offered to you by Jesus Himself!

Let our bond be evident –  
OUR LOVE!

Based on the book by Tom Rainer, 'I AM A CHURCH MEMBER.'