



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

FORMED FOR GOD'S FAMILY – FELLOWSHIP Week 5. Protecting Your Church (p161-168)

IT IS YOUR JOB TO PROTECT THE UNITY OF YOUR CHURCH. (p 161)

1. "Unity is the soul of fellowship. Destroy it, and rip the heart out of Christ's Body. It is the essence, the core, of how God intends for us to experience life together in his church." (p 161)
 - Why do you think it is so important to be a unified church?

2. "God wants unity, not uniformity. But for unity's sake, we must never let differences divide us." (p 162)
 - What is the difference between unity and uniformity?

3. "People become disillusioned with the church for many understandable reasons. The list could be quite long: conflict, hurt, hypocrisy, neglect, pettiness, legalism, and other sins... Reconciliation, not running away, is the road to stronger character and deeper fellowship." (p 163)
 - What would you say to a member who is ready to leave FFCC because of a conflict within the church or with another member?

4. "It is always easier to stand on the sidelines and take shots at those who are serving than it is to get involved and make a contribution." (p 164)

"Whenever I judge another believer, four things instantly happen: I lose fellowship with God, I expose my own pride and insecurity, I set myself up to be judged by God, and I harm fellowship of the church. A critical spirit is a costly vice." (p 165)

 - Discuss a time when you felt you were unjustly criticized or felt you were being judged?

5. "Gossip is passing on information when you are neither part of the problem nor part of the solution. You know spreading gossip is wrong, but you should not listen to it either, if you want to protect your church. Listening to gossip is like accepting stolen property, and it makes you just as guilty of the crime... People who gossip *to* you will also gossip *about* you." (p 165)
- What would you say to a member who attempts to engage you in gossip about the church?

 - Why is gossip a danger to unity in the church?
6. "There are no perfect leaders, but God gives leaders the responsibility and authority to maintain unity in the church. During interpersonal conflicts that is a thankless job. Pastors often have the unpleasant task of serving as mediator between hurt, conflicting, or immature members. They're also given the impossible task if trying to make everyone happy, which even Jesus could not do." (p 166)
- What are some of the ways we can show support and encouragement for our Pastor and leaders?

Unless otherwise noted, all Page References are to Rick Warren's book, "What On Earth Am I Here For?"