

INTEGRATED GENES

We need to stick together – the path is hard when we walk alone.
We all have doubts – fears – insecurities – concerns – struggles –
Is this true? What other things bother us?

Divided we falter, but united we stand.

Each of us can be a part of a beautiful melody – harmonious – a symphony, each
playing our part – even if we aren't musicians.
This is what the church should be – a family, connected, integrated together.
Do you agree?

1. Where does this yearning come from?

Genesis 1.1-3

God was there, creating. Each part of creation harmonises with every other part.
The Spirit hovered over the waters, the Word spoke. John 1.1-3.
God is one God, but Father, Son and Spirit harmoniously work together.
The greek word describes the relationship between Father, Son and Spirit,
giving, receiving, participating with each other.

John 5.19, 10.30, 14.10.

What is Jesus claiming for himself here? Why were the Jews so angry?

Islam has one God, Judaism has one God, Christianity has one God, but in three
persons.

God was designing, creating, in harmony. He said, Genesis 1.26 –
God is a relational God, and created us as relationship people. We are created to
connect with others.

How do we do that these days?

God created the earth, plants, animals, stars, etc and said it was all good.
Then he created Adam Genesis 2.28. what did he say then?

Adam was there with God, in perfect surroundings – but it was not good, so God
created Eve – so that they could relate, connect.
Adam alone was not complete, we are designed to be together, to connect with
others.

Genesis 2.25 – there was no need to hide

2. Why is it so hard to connect?

Adam and Eve searched for something beyond what God gave them.

What kinds of things might we try to find our security in? In Genesis 3.7, Adam and Eve cover themselves – hiding themselves from each other. There is tension, there are walls that weren't there before.

They then accuse each other – their relationship is broken – this is what theologians call The Fall. Later on, their firstborn son becomes a murderer.

Do we share our brokenness with others, or do we try to hide it?

3.Does it have to be this way?

God's plan is to bring us back into relationship with him and with each other. This is the gospel message. God brings us into a family – his family – the Church.

At Christmas, we remember that Jesus came as a man, one of us, to bring us back into relationship with God. Luke 19.10 What is his mission?

He told stories about lost things – Luke 15.4, 8,21-24. What was the response when the lost things were found?

God does everything to bring us back into relationship with him and then with each other.

Before Jesus went to the cross, he prayed for all who would come to believe in him – that is, each one of us, that all of us would be one.

John 17.20-21

As the world sees the love we have for each other, they will believe in Jesus, he said. Does the world see this unity in the Church?

We are to love one another for Jesus' sake – though we come from different backgrounds, with different customs, languages and ways of doing things.

4.What should we do to experience this harmony?

We need to connect with people

Make time for relationships – if we don't we won't be a part of the harmony. How easy or hard is this?

Ways to connect

Cut each other some slack

We are all broken people – none of us is perfect, we need to accept each other as we are.

We need to commit to grace and truth – God accepts us as we are, and helps us to grow and mature, We too can help each other to grow. How?

Jesus took all our wrongness on himself – every wrong thought, attitude, all pride, arrogance, meanness and whatever other wrong thing you can think of.....

So we can accept each other because of what he has done.

Open Up

Adam and eve hid behind the fig leaves. What do we hide behind?

God sees us exactly as we are, and does not condemn us, because Jesus took our condemnation on himself. So we should never condemn, but understand, and open up to our own weaknesses.

How easy is that?

But this allows the harmony to be heard. Let God, the conductor, bring breathtaking music through us to the world.

Do we want to be part of this amazing music?