

# Study Guide

## Sermon Recap

Danny draws an analogy between the discipline and unity found in the Marine Corps and the life of a Jesus follower. He emphasizes that instead of simply "joining" Jesus, individuals must earn their place as resilient warriors committed to the mission of love and unity. He warns against division, pointing out that our true enemy is not other people but the spirit of division itself. Ultimately, Danny urges the congregation to fight with love, worship, and prayer as weapons against division, standing firm in their commitment to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

## Ice Breaker

If you could have any fictional character as your personal assistant for a day, who would you choose and what tasks would you assign them?

# Discussion Questions

▼ Danny mentioned that division is a tactic of the enemy and highlighted many ways that division is seen in society today.

- What are some specific examples of division that you see in your own life or community, and how do they relate to what Danny discussed about division being a tactic of the enemy?
- How can you actively work to build bridges instead of walls in your interactions with others who may have different opinions or backgrounds?

▼ Danny emphasized that Jesus commands us to love one another, even when we have differing views.

- In what ways can you demonstrate love to someone you disagree with, even when it's hard?
- Can you think of a time when you chose love over division in a disagreement? How did that change the situation?

▼ Danny taught that our real enemy is not the person we are disagreeing with, but the division that seeks to pull us apart.

- How does the idea that 'our enemy is division' affect the way you approach conflicts with others?
- Think about a recent disagreement. How would approaching it with the mindset that division is the enemy change how you resolve it?

## Read Scripture

### ***Philippians 4:8-9 NIV***

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. <sup>9</sup> Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

### ***John 13:34-35 NIV***

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

# Discussion Questions

▼ Danny quoted Philippians 4:8 about thinking on things that are true, noble, and excellent.

- Why do you think this is important when discussing divisive topics?
- How can you apply this scripture to your social media use or conversations, especially on topics that might cause division?

▼ Danny highlighted the Marines' commitment to each other and how that mirrors how Jesus followers should support one another.

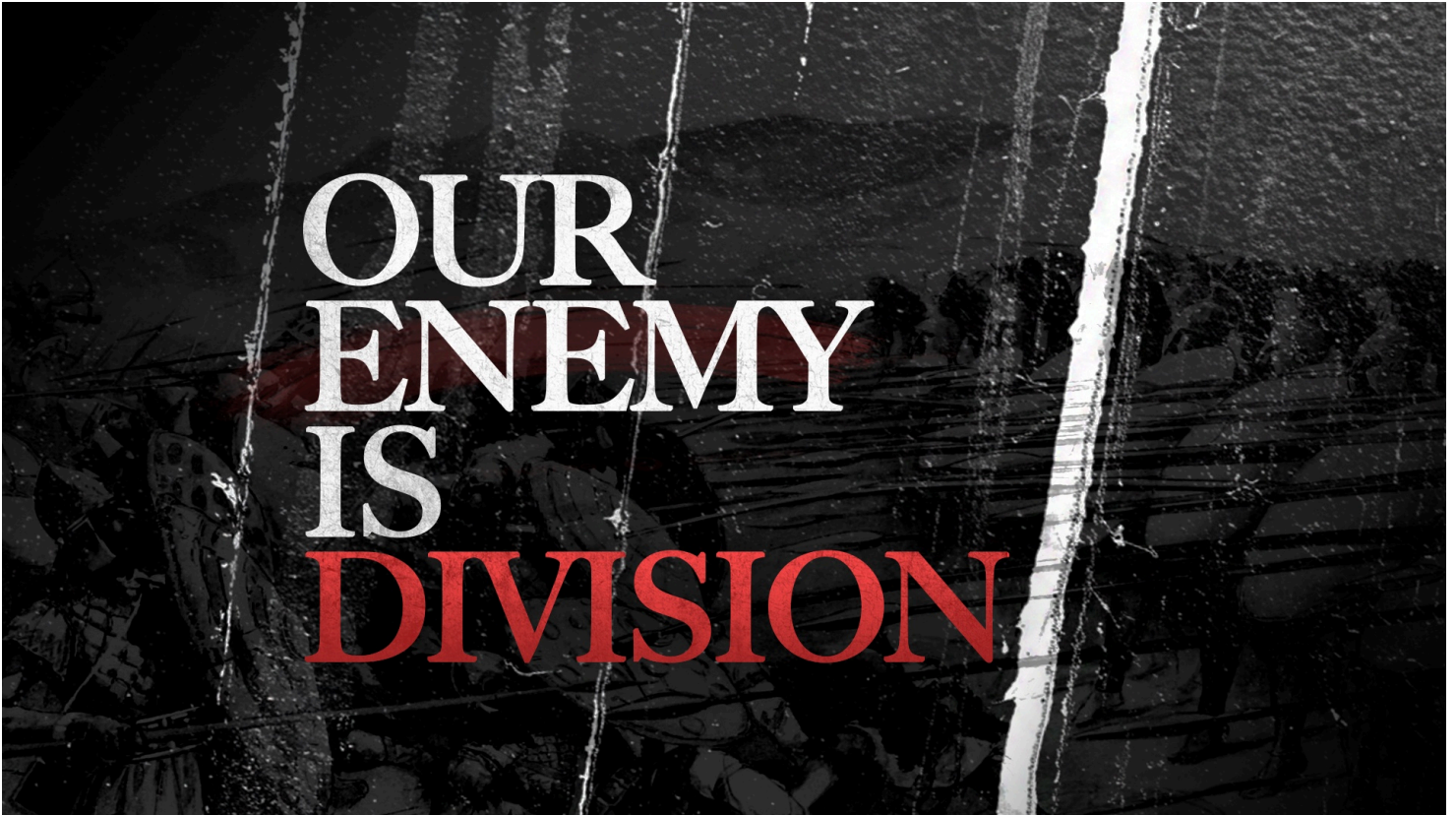
- What are some ways you can support a culture of unity in your school or community, similar to the description of the Marines' commitment to not leave anyone behind?
- What is a specific action you can take this week to promote unity, whether it's in conversation, social media, or a community project.

## Prayer

- Share any prayer requests with the group.
- Ask God to help us embody the unity and love described in the sermon.
- Pray for resilience in facing the challenges that create division around us.
- Request God's guidance in how we speak and act on social media and in person.

## Rewatch the sermon

Visit [victorycc.life/watch](https://victorycc.life/watch) for on-demand access to all of our sermons.



# 5 Day Reading Plan

## Day 1

### *Philippians 4*

This passage reminds us that unity in Christ is essential, and division is a tool the enemy uses to weaken believers. In verses 2-3, Paul urges two women, Euodia and Syntyche, to reconcile and work together in the Lord. This shows that even faithful Christians can fall into conflict, but unity is vital for the gospel's advancement. Division distracts us from our true mission and sows discord in the body of Christ. Instead of allowing disagreements to separate us, we are called to focus on what is true, noble, and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8). Paul also reminds us that God's peace, which surpasses all understanding, will guard our hearts when we choose unity over division. Are there conflicts in your life that are hindering your faith or relationships? The enemy wants to divide, but Christ calls us to love, forgive, and work together for His glory. When we stand firm in the Lord, division loses its power, and the peace of God reigns in our hearts and communities.

- Are there any divisions in your relationships—whether in your family, church, or community—that God is calling you to mend?
- How can focusing on what is true, noble, and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8) help you overcome conflict and promote unity?

- In what ways can you be a peacemaker in your relationships, resisting division and reflecting Christ's love?
- Ask God to reveal any areas of division in your life and give you the wisdom, humility, and strength to seek reconciliation, so that His peace may reign in your heart and relationships.

## Day 2

### *Ephesians 4*

This passage emphasizes the importance of unity in the body of Christ and warns against division, which weakens our witness and effectiveness. Paul urges believers to live with humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another in love (Ephesians 4:2). He reminds us that there is *one* body, *one* Spirit, and *one* Lord, calling us to be united in our faith (Ephesians 4:4-6). Division is the enemy's tactic to create discord, causing us to lose focus on our true purpose—to grow together in Christ. When we allow bitterness, anger, or unforgiveness to take root, we give the devil a foothold (Ephesians 4:26-27). Instead, we are called to build each other up, speaking truth in love and working together in harmony. Are there places in your life where division has taken hold? Christ calls us to put away selfishness and instead walk in love, just as He loved and forgave us. When we choose unity over division, we reflect God's love and strengthen His church. Let's commit to being peacemakers, resisting the enemy's schemes, and striving for the unity God desires.

- Are there any areas in your life—family, church, or friendships—where division has crept in, and how can you seek unity?
- How does choosing humility, patience, and love help resist the enemy's attempts to divide believers?
- In what ways can you actively build up others with your words and actions instead of allowing division to take root?
- Ask God to reveal any areas where division has taken hold in your life and give you the wisdom, love, and humility to seek unity, so that His church may be strengthened and His love may be displayed.

## Day 3

### *John 13:31-38*

Jesus gives His disciples a new command: *"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."* This kind of love is sacrificial, selfless, and unifying. Division is the enemy of love because it breeds pride, bitterness, and disunity, which weaken our witness to the world. Jesus says that our love for one another will show that we are His disciples (John 13:35), meaning unity is not optional—it's essential. When we let disagreements, grudges, or selfishness divide us, we are not reflecting Christ's love. Peter's bold but flawed response in this passage reminds us that even the most passionate followers of Jesus can fall into pride or self-reliance, which can also lead to division. Instead, we are called to humility and reconciliation, putting Christ's love above our differences. Is there someone in your life with whom you need to restore unity? The enemy wants to

divide, but Jesus calls us to love as He loved—to forgive, to serve, and to stand together as His people.

- Are there any relationships in your life where division has taken root, and how can you take a step toward reconciliation?
- How does sacrificial love, as Jesus demonstrated, help overcome division and strengthen unity among believers?
- In what ways can you show Christ’s love to others, even when disagreements or conflicts arise?
- Ask God to soften your heart, help you love others as Jesus loves, and give you the humility and courage to seek unity where division has tried to take hold.

## Day 4

### *Ephesians 6*

This passage reminds us that our true battle is not against one another but against spiritual forces of evil (Ephesians 6:12). The enemy uses division to weaken the body of Christ, turning believers against each other instead of standing firm together. Paul urges us to put on the full armor of God so that we can resist these attacks and remain united in faith. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and God’s Word equip us to fight against the schemes of the devil, including division (Ephesians 6:13-17). When we allow conflict, pride, or bitterness to separate us, we are playing into the enemy’s hands. Instead, we must stand firm in God’s strength, praying for one another and striving for unity (Ephesians 6:18). Are you allowing division to take root in your heart or relationships? Remember, our fight is not against people but against the forces that seek to destroy love and unity. Through Christ, we can overcome division and stand together as one body, fully equipped for the battles ahead. Let’s choose unity, knowing that together we are stronger in Christ.

- How can recognizing that our true battle is spiritual, not against people, change the way you handle conflict and division?
- Which piece of God’s armor do you need to rely on more to stand firm against division in your relationships?
- How can prayer help you fight against the enemy’s schemes and promote unity in your family, church, or community?
- Ask God to help you see division for what it is—a tactic of the enemy—and to equip you with His armor so that you can stand firm in truth, love, and unity with those around you.

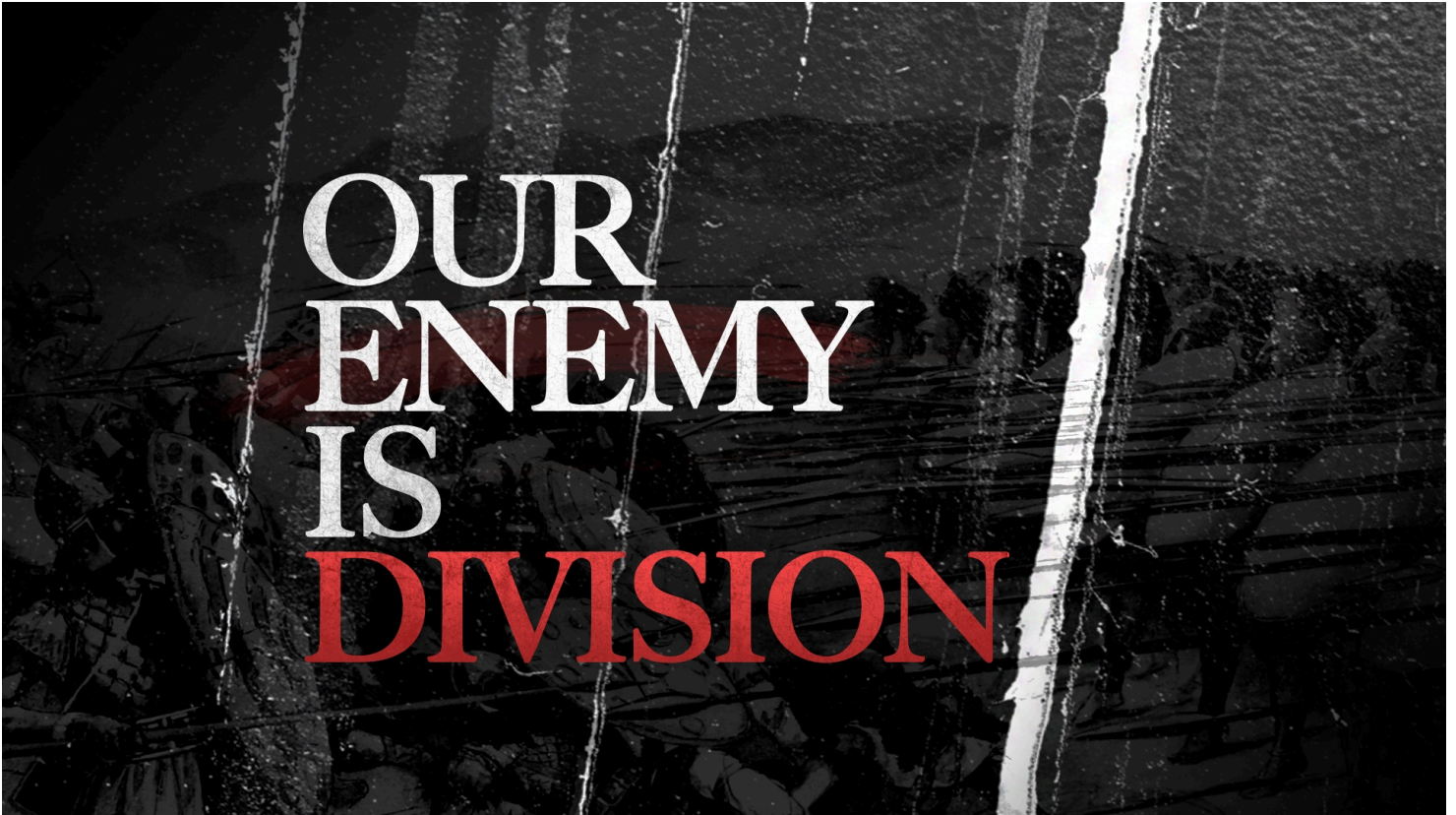
## Day 5

### *2 Corinthians 10*

This passage reminds us that our battles are not fought with worldly weapons but with divine power to demolish strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:4). Division is one of the enemy’s strongest tactics, seeking to separate believers and weaken the body of Christ. Paul warns against arguments and prideful thoughts that set themselves up against God’s truth (2 Corinthians 10:5), reminding us to

take every thought captive to obey Christ. When we allow pride, comparison, or offense to take root, we create barriers between ourselves and others. Instead, we are called to fight these divisive thoughts with humility, love, and the truth of God's Word. The enemy wants us to see each other as rivals, but God calls us to unity and cooperation in Christ. Are there strongholds of division in your heart or relationships that need to be torn down? By surrendering our thoughts and attitudes to Christ, we can overcome the enemy's schemes. Let's choose obedience, humility, and love so that division has no place in our lives. When we stand together in Christ, we walk in the victory He has already won.

- Are there any thoughts, attitudes, or grudges in your heart that might be contributing to division rather than unity?
- How can taking every thought captive to Christ help you overcome conflicts and strengthen your relationships?
- In what ways can you actively fight against division in your church, family, or community using the truth of God's Word?
- Ask God to reveal and tear down any strongholds of division in your heart, helping you take every thought captive to Christ so that you may walk in unity, humility, and love with others.



# Want To Go Deeper?

## Historical Context

John 13:31-38 is a significant passage in the Gospel of John, occurring during the Last Supper, just after Judas Iscariot leaves to betray Jesus. Here are some important historical and contextual points to consider:

1. **The Setting:** This passage takes place during the Last Supper, a pivotal moment in Jesus' ministry. It is the night before His crucifixion, and Jesus is with His disciples in the upper room. This intimate setting is crucial as Jesus imparts final teachings and commands to His closest followers.
2. **Judas' Departure:** The passage begins with Judas leaving the room to betray Jesus (John 13:30). This act sets the stage for Jesus to speak more openly with the remaining disciples about His impending departure and the new commandment He is about to give.
3. **Glorification:** Jesus speaks of being glorified and God being glorified in Him (John 13:31-32). This refers to His upcoming crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. In the Gospel of John, Jesus' glorification is closely tied to His sacrificial death, which reveals God's love and plan for salvation.



4. **The New Commandment:** Jesus gives His disciples a new commandment to love one another as He has loved them (John 13:34). This commandment is central to Christian ethics and emphasizes the selfless, sacrificial love that Jesus exemplified. It is a call to unity and mutual care among His followers.
5. **Peter's Denial Foretold:** Jesus predicts Peter's denial (John 13:36-38). Despite Peter's protestations of loyalty, Jesus foretells that Peter will deny Him three times before the rooster crows. This prediction highlights human weakness and the need for reliance on God's grace.
6. **Theological Themes:** The passage underscores themes of love, betrayal, loyalty, and the nature of true discipleship. It challenges believers to embody Christ-like love and to remain faithful even in the face of trials and failures.

Understanding these elements helps to grasp the depth of Jesus' teachings and the gravity of the moment as He prepares His disciples for the events that will soon unfold.

# Greek Word Study

## schisma

Original Word: **σχίσμα**

Pronunciation: SKHIS-mah

Phonetic Spelling: (skhis'-mah)

Part of Speech: Noun, Neuter

Transliteration: schisma

Definition: Division, schism, split

Meaning: a rent, as in a garment; a division, dissention.

Word Origin: Derived from the Greek verb **σχίζω** (schizō), meaning "to split" or "to divide."

Hebrew Counterpart: While there is no direct Hebrew equivalent for "schisma," the concept of division can be related to Hebrew words like **פָּרַץ** (perets, breach) or **מַחְלֻקֶת** (machloqeth, division).

Usage: In the New Testament, "schisma" refers to a division or split within a group, often implying a discord or separation among people who were once united. It is used to describe both physical and metaphorical separations, particularly within the context of the early Christian community.

Cultural and Historical Background: In the Greco-Roman world, unity and harmony were highly valued, especially within social and religious groups. The early Christian church, emerging in this context, faced challenges of maintaining unity amidst diverse cultural, ethnic, and theological backgrounds. The term "schisma" captures the tensions and divisions that could arise within the church, threatening its witness and mission.

# Deeper Application

1. **Commitment to Unity:** Just as Marines operate as a unit and leave no one behind, Christians are called to maintain unity within the body of Christ. This means actively working against division, whether it arises from political, social, or personal disagreements. Unity is not about uniformity of thought but about a shared commitment to love and support one another despite differences.
2. **Love as a Weapon Against Division:** The sermon emphasizes that love is the primary weapon against division. This love is not passive or sentimental but active and intentional, modeled after Jesus' love for us. It involves choosing to love others even when it is difficult, and especially when disagreements arise. This love is characterized by grace, patience, and compassion.
3. **Resilience in Spiritual Warfare:** The sermon draws a parallel between the discipline and resilience of Marines and the spiritual resilience required of Christians. Followers of Jesus are engaged in a spiritual battle against division and must remain steadfast in their faith, using prayer, forgiveness, and love as their tools.
4. **Reflecting Christ in All Interactions:** The sermon challenges believers to reflect Christ in their interactions, both in person and online. This means being mindful of how our words and actions can either draw people closer to Christ or push them away. It involves using a "filter" based on Philippians 4:8 to ensure that our communications are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable.
5. **Choosing Love Over Division:** The sermon underscores that while disagreement is unavoidable, division is a choice. Christians are called to choose love over division, following Jesus' command to love one another as He has loved us. This choice requires humility, self-examination, and a willingness to prioritize relationships over being right.