

# BGCT president: Unity in the body of Christ

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Growing up in my Hispanic home helped me handle many conversations and issues dealing with unity.



René MacielMy mom and dad both were great cooks, and they both had their ways of preparing food. Food was our way to gather and enjoy family. So, my parents always were preparing meals—enchiladas, posolé, tamales and, of course, rice and beans. As mom and dad would tag-team on preparing these great meals, they also would disagree on the ingredients or how it was to be cooked. So they would argue, or maybe fight sometimes. They both had their ways of preparing that food, and they both wanted their way.

In spite of those disagreements, they were married 59 years and loved each other deeply. They were such a great example for me to understand sometimes you may have disagreements and even fight over differences, but even through those differences, we can also love one another and carry on a relationship.

They taught me a life lesson: Even through differences, we must remain faithful to the body of Christ. The Apostle Paul asked, “Is Christ divided?” Many times, churches and individuals struggle through differences to the point they are divided. They no longer have a connection, a partnership. They pull away. That pulling away only damages the uniqueness we have in Christ.



Jesus even prayed for us that we would be one, so the world would recognize Christ in us: “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (John 17:20-23).

We are called to live in unity and to be cooperative. Again, I know we will have differences, yet we still are joined in the great commission of sharing the gospel with the world around us. The early church came together and had everything in common.

The idea of the Cooperative Program unified budget, created in 1925, was to work toward a common goal of sharing the gospel with every person on the planet. As Texas Baptists, we have a great work to do. Let it begin with our kingdom-mindedness, our call to be one.

My prayer for our convention is that we will be unified in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. May we not let our differences damage or hurt our credibility among unbelievers.

Thank you taking these last 30 days to pray for our convention. God has

given us a great work, and it begins with prayer—for church leaders, our state leadership, our churches, our neighbors and our unity.

We are the body of Christ. Pray for unity.

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