

being church in a time of

division

being church in a time of

5 questions/conversations:

1. what is division?

2. why are we wired for division?

3. why is division the flip side of belonging?

4. how can we be part of the solution?

5. what about my congregation &
denomination?

1. what is ...

di -

- vision

di -

- vision

two+ visions

of a desirable

future

(and how to get there)

in the early church ...

- let Gentiles in?
- keep biblical laws?
- keep cherished traditions?
- pursue non-violence?
- - slavery? women?
- Emperor worship?

in american church history ...

- Native Americans as Canaanites?
- African slaves as sons of Ham?
- Irish, Italians, Spanish, Chinese,
Japanese - welcome?
- Continue anti-Semitism?
- Equality for women?

There's a time to thank God for
division.

(Matthew 10)

today ...

- hide past, or truth & conciliation?
- deny or address global warming?
- LGBTQ - sin or diversity?
- Bible vs science, Bible and science?
- church and politics?

1 Corinthians 13:

It's not just for weddings any
more.

when love is the desired end,
love must also be the means.

1 Corinthians 13

I will show you the most excellent way.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels,
but have not love, I am a noisy gong
or a clanging cymbal.

And if I have prophetic powers,
and understand all mysteries
and all knowledge,
and if I have all faith, so as to
remove mountains,
but have not love, I am nothing.

If I give away all I have,
And if I deliver my body to be
burned,
but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind;
Love is not jealous or boastful;
Love is not arrogant or rude.

Love does not insist on its own way;

Love is not irritable or resentful;
Love does not rejoice at wrong, but
rejoices in the right.

Love bears all things,
believes all things,
hopes all things,
endures all things.

Love never ends.

As for prophecies, they will pass away;

As for tongues, they will cease;

As for knowledge, it will pass away.

For our knowledge and our prophecy are imperfect;

But when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away.

When I was a child, I spoke and
thought and reasoned like a child,
 But when I became an adult,
 I gave up childish ways.

For now we see in a mirror dimly,
 But then face to face.
Now I know in part; then I shall
understand fully,
 Even as I have been fully
understood.

So faith, hope, and love abide, these three;

But the greatest of these is love.

I will show you the most excellent way.

Follow the way of love.

Amen.

3-minute meeting

how does this understanding of competing visions help you understand tensions you feel with others - in the church and in society?

how could you put “their” vision of the future, or fears of the future, in terms they would agree with?

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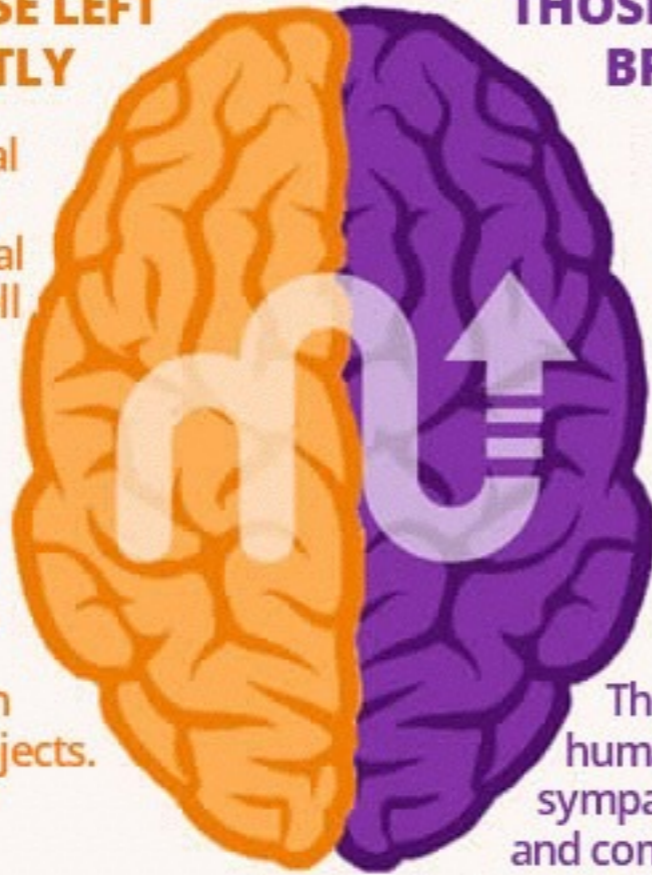
2. why are we wired for division?

the division is not just
between us and them.

we are individually divided
too.

THOSE WHO USE LEFT BRAIN MORE EFFICIENTLY

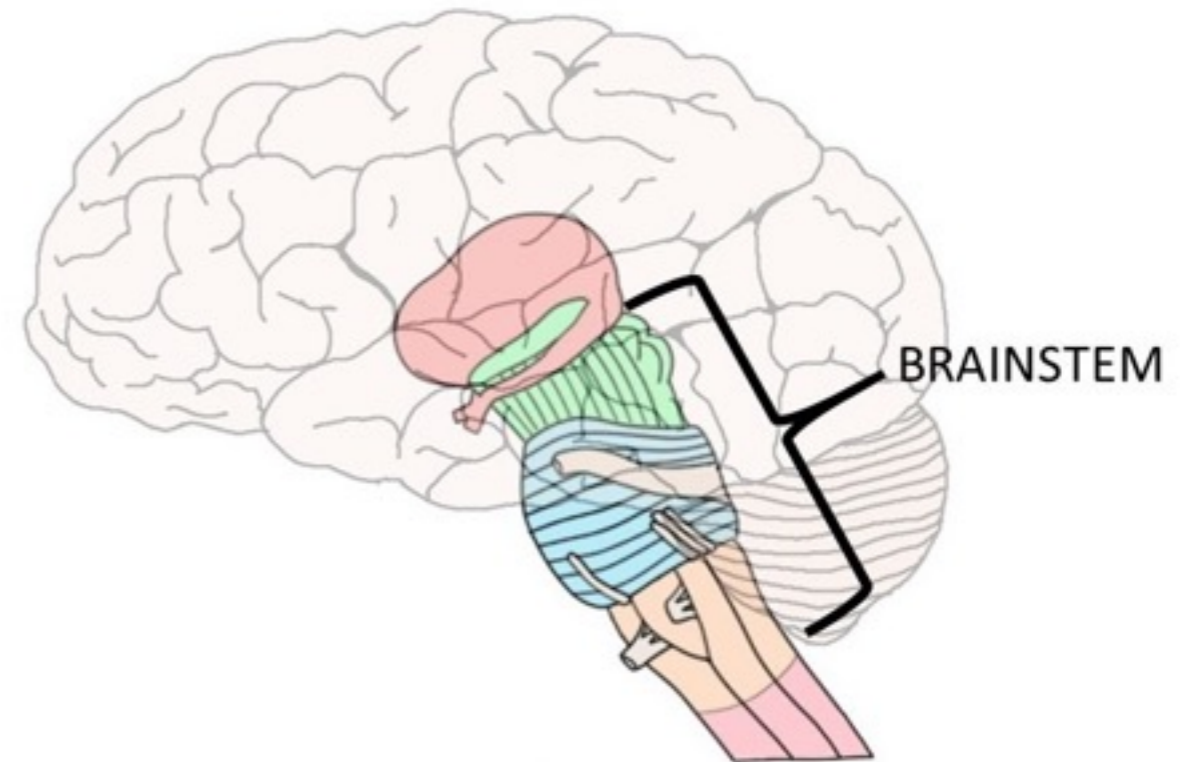
- It is logical
- Interested in mathematical expressions, uses language well
- It is pragmatic, cares the results
- Interested in clear results
- The left brain successful in academic and scientific subjects.



THOSE WHO USE RIGHT BRAIN MORE EFFICIENTLY

- It is emotional
- It deals with visual, artistic subjects
- Case the purpose and looks for goodwill
- It is intuitive, trusts its intuition
- The right brain possesses humanistic features like emotionality, sympathy, empathy, feelings, and compassion.

mentalup.net



THOSE WHO USE LEFT
BRAIN MORE EFFICIENTLY

brain stem: fear! danger! reflexes!

Interested in mathematical
expressions, uses language well

It is pragmatic,
It is pragmatic,
Interested in
clear results

The left brain successful in
scientific and scientific subjects.

left brain: logic, independence

THOSE WHO USE RIGHT
BRAIN MORE EFFICIENTLY

It deals with visual,
artistic subjects

Case the purpose and looks
for goodwill
It is intuitive,
trusts its intuition

The right brain possesses
humanistic features like emotionality,
sympathy, empathy, feelings
and compassion.

your brain is a
committee.

BRAINSTEM

All of us are primally attuned to
fear and danger.

All of us are deeply attuned to
relationships, feelings,
belonging.

All of us are deeply attuned to
independence, analysis,
fairness, & argument.

Some of us are primarily attuned
to fear and danger.

Some of us are primarily attuned
to relationships, feelings,
belonging.

How many of us are
aware of these inner
dynamics at work in
ourselves?

Some of us are primarily
attuned to independence,
analysis, & argument.

*because of our divided brain
committee, we are all prone
to bias - over a dozen forms
of bias.*

confirmation
complexity
community
complementarity
competency
consciousness
comfort
conservative/liberal
catastrophe
contact
confidence
cash
conspiracy

*our brains are wired for over a dozen types
of bias*

3-minute meeting

how does this understanding of our brain committee help you understand tensions you feel with others?

how would you describe the state of your brain committee?

what's going on with your counterparts (in terms they would agree with)?

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3. why is division the flip side of belonging?

the problem of multiple belonging



the problem of multiple belonging



3-minute meeting

how does this understanding of multiple belonging help you understand why churches - and our nation - are under so much stress these days?

where do you feel the tension of multiple belonging?

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4. how can we be part of the solution?

don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds ...

don't be overcome with evil, but instead, overcome evil with good. (Romans 12)

THE SEVEN COMMITMENTS OF COMMON GOOD COMMUNICATION

I am committed to the seven values of
Common Good Communication: example,
integrity, curiosity, clarity, decency, fairness,
and persistence.

1. **EXAMPLE:** I will lead by example in my
communication, in public and in private.
When I fall short, I'll admit it, apologize, and
reaffirm my commitment to lead by
example.

2. INTEGRITY: I will put country over party, the whole truth over convenience, and the common good over self-interest, so I cannot be bought, blackmailed, or otherwise corrupted.

3. CURIOSITY: I will show uncommon curiosity by asking honest questions, seeking to understand others as I would want to be understood.

4. **CLARITY:** I won't hold back, speak half truths, be intentionally vague, or attempt to deceive. I will self-report my feelings and my underlying values whenever possible.

5. **DECENCY:** I will strive to show genuine courtesy toward everyone, especially when we disagree. I will not mock, call names, or dehumanize any person or group. I will establish and uphold ground rules for respectful conversation whenever possible.

6. FAIRNESS: I will practice basic fairness in these five ways:

- I won't compare my side's best with the other side's worst.
- I will not assume the worst motives in my opponents.
- I will acknowledge the upsides and downsides of all positions.
- I will praise my counterparts when they deserve it, and challenge my allies when they deserve it.
- I will notice who isn't at the table, and I will do my part to be sure they are included and heard.

7. PERSISTENCE: I expect this work to be hard and I will stay in the room with difference, never giving up and always seeking the common good.

I am committed to the seven values
of Common Good Communication:

example,
integrity,
curiosity,
clarity,
decency,
fairness,
persistence.

James
Ephesians
Colossians
Matthew
Proverbs

3-minute meeting

what's your response to these common good communication commitments?

have you been taught some or all of these before?

could you imagine our churches teaching skills like these?

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5. what about my congregation
and denomination?

four kinds of churches in times of
division:

four kinds of churches in times of division:

nostalgic/complicit: mirror the division

eggshell: deny the division

tension: name and grapple with the division

creative: seize the opportunity

My proposal:

Give everyone a promotion.

Seriously.

3-minute meeting

complicit/eggshell/tension/creative

where is your congregation?

where would you like to be, and why?

what would the cost be of going there?

what would the benefits be?

what would the promotion idea look like for
you?

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Let's stay in touch!

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O God, whose love
makes us one family,

May all honor you as
holy and good.

Now, here on earth may your
commonwealth come.

On earth, as in heaven, may your
dreams come true.



Give us today our bread for
today.

Forgive us our wrongs as we
forgive.

Lead us away from the perilous trial;
liberate us from the evil.



For the kingdom is yours and yours alone,
the power is yours and yours alone,
and the glory is yours and yours alone,
Now and forever. Amen.

Now, here on earth may your
commonwealth come.

On earth, as in heaven, may your
dreams come true.

Alleluia

Alleluia

Amen

Let's stay in touch!

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