



Empowering People to Change the World

**The Power and Grace of Unity:  
Acts 4:23-37**

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## Lord's Prayer

### Clothed in Power graphic

- Example: God in creation; God in our human body; cancer cells...
- And what we see today is an amazingly unified church in Acts 4. And what we see is a unified church can attack the kingdom of darkness and drive it out before the cancer of demonic opposition can get a foothold that can become a stronghold.
- Ex. Take my five fingers and hold them up and form a fist. Individual parts unified!

### The Power & Grace of Unity! Acts 4:23-37

- Underline "one accord" in verse 24...look at verse 32 and underline "one heart and one soul," underline "all things in common."
- This is an amazingly unified group of people! Look back at chapter 1:14; 2:1, 46.

**"One Accord" *homothumaden*  
*homo*-same, together in oneness;  
*thumaden*-passion, vision, focus  
Meaning: Oneness in passion and purpose**

Homer translated *homothumaden* as agreement.

Amos 3:3 asks, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" In a Christian context, agreement means being unified in spirit, purpose, and values.

Synergy is the state in which the whole is more than the sum of the parts. The church in Acts was growing in synergy.

- In the OT, it is the idea of two oxen walking together like one oxen. One shoulder, not two.

2 Corinthians 6:14-16

**One theologian writes, "One accord, helps us understand the uniqueness of the Christian community... the image is almost musical; a number of notes are sounded which, while different, harmonize in pitch and tone. Like the instruments of a great concert under the direction of a concert master."**

- So, the Holy Spirit blends together the lives of members of Christ's church

## Unity of Purpose Grants us Great Power and Grace from God

Vs. 23 and 31	They had Unity in Prayer
Vs. 32-33	They had Unity in Purpose
Vs. 34-35	They had Unity in Finances

- They were under great fire from the government in Jerusalem (outside the church) but we will see next time, that they also will have great fire from the inside with a couple in the church.

## Disunity is Satan's Greatest Tool

Like cancer cells disrupting the unity of your body, disunity is one of the main ways of keeping God at bay. Most Christians don't understand how disunity keeps us from God.

- Disunity is one of the biggest cultural calamities of our day. It manifests itself through gossip, through jealousy, and through pride.
- Most Christian churches and most Christian marriages have no idea how destructive disunity really is.
  - We have disunity in our churches. Dividing over all kinds of issues.

**Satan knows God won't show up where there is disunity! He wants to get you fusin' and cussin'.**

- On every level of life:
  - Most people are disunified within themselves.
  - Disunity in your body—cancer cells, renegade cells that gather together to destroy your good cells
  - Disunity in your marriage—disagreements, anger, hurt, betrayal to cause one to run from the other.
    - 1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.
  - Disunity in your home—among your children!
    - Disunity!! Chaos. That's what demons love.
  - Disunity in your finances—this church in Acts were unified in their giving. They had placed Jesus and the Kingdom of God first! But Satan came (next week) to disunify their finances!
  - Disunity in the church—churches all around us are falling apart due to disunity!

**Unity is oneness of purpose. Jesus says He came to bring glory to the Father. The Spirit says He came to bring glory to Jesus.**

### Romans 16:17

*Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.*

- Watch out for disunifiers and dissenters! They stir up things even in the Kingdom of God.

## Unity of the Spirit

### Ephesians 4:1-3

*I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, <sup>2</sup> with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup> endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

- Unity is a spiritual issue. The unity of the Spirit. If you are not a true disciple of Jesus, then your propensity for disunity exponentially increases!
- In other words, the more spiritually mature you are, then the more spiritually unified you will be. The more unspiritual you are, the greater possibility for disunity in your life.
- Wherever disunity is normalized, the Holy Spirit is not there. Whenever you see a couple in disunity, one or both couples are not filled with the Holy Spirit.
- When churches divide, someone has left the Spirit. The bond of peace. Bond means belt. Your belt is unhooked. The belt of peace!

#### **Vs. 4-6**

*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

#### **Unity is Oneness of Purpose**

- “One” unity is oneness of purpose! Unity is not sameness of persons but oneness of purpose.
- All theology begins with the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—three persons but one purpose. One God with three co-equal persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—with one purpose.
- One in essence but distinct in personhood! The Father is not the Son; the Son is not the Spirit; the Spirit is not the Father. But all three make up the One Godhead.
- They are distinct in person, but they are not distinct in purpose! The unity of the Godhead is their oneness in purpose as they share in the divine nature. The only breach of this was Jesus on the cross when Jesus said, “God, why has thou forsaken Me?” A disruption.
- The unity of the Godhead is the key to understand the unity of the Church, the unity of a marriage. In other words, God works in unity. God works in unity in your body—healthy cells as God created them, are unified! A healthy marriage between two people is unified. A healthy church under God’s spiritual direction is unified. That’s what we see here in our passage.
- They are of “one accord” *homothumaden*—running together, of the same breath together, same purpose—same goal.

**Unity is not Uniformity. It’s not everyone looking the same but everyone on the same agenda.**

**1 Cor. 1:10-13 Personality cult. People were choosing personalities causing havoc and disunity in the church**

- Ex. A football team with 11 men on offense and defense but one goal line. Different colors, different people going after one goal line.

**Now this next part is really important. Turn to Ephesians 4:13**

**When God’s Standards are Upheld and God’s Love is Experienced, God Shows up in Unity**

#### **Ephesian 4:13-14**

*till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and*

*carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,*

- Notice that Paul is saying that the unity of faith is based in the knowledge of God through the fullness of Christ.
- We are to keep growing in Him—not thinking or acting like children.
- We divide over sin and doctrine. We have a goal post here—truth and love! You want God standard proclaimed and God’s heart being felt.

### **Ephesian 4:15-16**

*but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*

- Build us up with love! When God’s standards are upheld and God’s heart is experienced, God show up in unity! Unless the God does something there is no hope.
- This is our spiritual immune system! This is our spiritual white blood cells. The body heals itself.
- You have the Spirit living within you. God will create disunity when you try to unify without the Spirit. Nimrod tries to unify without the Spirit of God.

### **Psalm 133**

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is  
For brethren to dwell together in unity!  
...For there the Lord commanded the blessing—  
Life forevermore.*

- God commands a blessing! This is the only place in the Bible where God commands a blessing. Not the culture definition of unity but God’s definition of unity. Let God be true and every man a liar.

### **John 17 The High Priestly Prayer**

*that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

- Praying for His people using the word “one” as we are! Like us. Oneness of purpose “that the world might know...that they may see My glory.”
- I want them to see what I can do! If you want to see what God can do in you, you need to get spiritually unified in your heart. If you want to see God show up in your marriage, you better get spiritually unified. If you want God to show up in your business, you better get your business spiritually unified.

Ministry Time: Some of you desperately need unity in your life—within yourself. Some of you need unity in your marriage...