

Midweek Study



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Living in Unity and Generosity

Acts 4:32-37

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can." – John Wesley

I. **Connection** in Unity (Acts 4:32)

"Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul..."

- True unity is not about **uniformity** (everyone looking or acting the same) but being united in purpose and mission.
Believers shared a deep connection through their faith in Christ. (see **Philippians 2:3-4**)
- Their shared mission led to shared resources, as they prioritized the needs of others over personal possessions.
- **Application:** Work toward unity in your local church by fostering relationships built on love, understanding, and shared purpose. Ask yourself: **Am I contributing to the unity of my church, or am I causing division?**

II. **Compassion** in Generosity (Acts 4:32-35)

"Neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common..."

- 1) **Generosity is Voluntary:**
 - The early believers weren't forced to give; their generosity flowed from a heart transformed by the gospel.
 - This was not communism but a willing act of love and compassion for those in need.
- 2) **Generosity is Sacrificial:**
 - Believers sold possessions to meet the needs of others, recognizing that their resources ultimately belonged to God.
 - The widow's mite (**Luke 21:1-4**) shows that sacrificial giving is about the heart, not the amount.

3) **Generosity is Practical:**

- Needs were met as individuals gave with open hands and open hearts.
- **James 2:15-16** reminds us that faith without works is dead—real faith acts to meet real needs.
- **Application:** Look for tangible ways to meet the needs of others, especially within your church. Pray: **Lord, show me how I can use what You've given me to bless someone else.**

III. **Commitment to Care (Acts 4:36-37)**

"And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement)... having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."

- **Barnabas' Care Was Tangible:** Barnabas sold his land and gave generously, earning the nickname "**Son of Encouragement.**" His actions encouraged others and strengthened the church. Barnabas' generosity set a standard for the early church and inspired others to follow his example.
- **When We Care, We Reflect Christ:** Barnabas' example points to Christ's love, which calls believers to serve and encourage one another.
- **The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)** demonstrated care by saying, "**What's mine is yours, and I'll share it,**" in contrast to the thieves ("**What's yours is mine, and I'll take it**") and the religious leaders ("**What's mine is mine, and I'll keep it**").
- **Application:** Be an encourager like Barnabas. Ask: **How can I use my resources, time, or talents to uplift someone else today?**

Principles for Today:

1. **Sacrificial Giving** - Give even when it costs you.
 - **James 2:15-16:** Faith without works is dead.
 - The widow's mite (**Luke 21:1-4**) - Jesus commended her sacrificial heart, not the amount.
2. **Sharing Resources** - Recognize that resources are tools to bless others.
 - **1 Timothy 6:17-19:** "Be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share."
 - Recognize that **God blesses us to bless others.**
3. **Surrendering Ownership** - Understand that everything we have belongs to God.
 - **1 John 3:17-18:** "Whoever has this world's goods and sees his brother in need... let us not love in word but in deed and truth."