

Love & Unity Among the Saints

Acts 4:32-37

Introduction

With deep hatred Satan seeks to fracture, fragment, and separate in order to *weaken*.

With great love, the Lord unifies in order to *strengthen*.

Acts 2:44-45

The saints were unified not just spiritually, but *tangibly*.

Christian unity is manifest in compassion, generosity, and *charity*.

True biblical love (*charity*) always has the honor, the purity, and the well-being of its object in mind.

“more than conquerors.”! Romans 8:37-39

The love Jesus has for God the Father was manifested in good works. Ours should be too.

This unity is internal, God-given *spiritual unity*, not external, self-imposed organizational *uniformity*.

The church at Sardis: Revelation 3:1-2

“*but you are dead*” spiritually.

The Holy Spirit unites believers in the love of Christ and ignites them for Christian service.

It is “love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.” Colossians 3:14

“Love is the doorway through which the human soul passes from selfishness to service and from solitude to kinship with all mankind.” Anonymous

Ephesians 4:2-6

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” Ephesians 5:1-2

Our love shown in the *care of souls* is meant to include meeting physical needs.

“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2

The main characteristic of Christian love is benevolence. Love *gives*.

1 John 3:16-17

People *do whatever* is most important to them – no matter what they *say*.

“Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.” 1 John 3:18

Good intentions are meaningless unless they lead to *action*.

The evidence of true sincerity of heart is in the doing.

“There is no love that does not become help.” Paul Tillich

James 2:15-17

5 Points of Application

1. Recognize that you are part of something – a loving unity with divine purpose. (v32a)

“Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul,”

- A. The family of God – by adoption
- B. The body of Christ – by the Spirit
- C. A community of believers – in Christ

2. Realize that all you have belongs to God and you are His steward. (v32b)

“and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.”

Our TEMPorary resources given by God to be used for His purposes in this life:

Time
Energy
Money
Possessions

1 Corinthians 4:7

“A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.” John 3:27

“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them.” Romans 12:6

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.”
1 Peter 4:10

3. Retain the power you have received to proclaim the Gospel. (v33a)

“And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,”

Acts 1:8

4. Retrieve the grace given to persevere in the battle. (v33b)

“and great grace was upon them all.”

“And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.” John 1:16

“in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” Romans 8:37

5. Release your God-given resources in service to Christ. (vv34-35)

“There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.”

Matthew 25:34-40