

CHAPTER 25.8

ACTS

“POWER IN COMMUNITY”
Acts 4:32-37
January 29, 2017

We can characterize the Jerusalem church with one word: Jesus.

Unity is a mindset expressed in a lifestyle.

I. Unity’s Mindset (32)

A. One Heart: Passions and Desires

One object of our love: Jesus.

B. One Soul: Thought and Mind

One overarching, mind capturing focus: Jesus.

II. Unity’s Lifestyle

A. Powerful Testimony (33)

Great power was a gift of the HS

B. Practical Care

Great grace provided by the Holy Spirit

Material belongings were stewarded for the good of the body.

C. Personal Model – Barnabas

Powerful community is not an abstract concept.

It requires real people living other-focused lives because their hearts and minds have been captured by Jesus.

How does this apply to me?

NEXT WEEK

“PURIFIED”
Acts 5:1-11

Passage Overview:

There was deep unity among the early Jerusalem believers. Love for one another was expressed through mutual care and concern. Chapter four ended by telling us that many individuals willingly sold their assets in order to provide for those who were in need. This honored the Lord. The Christians were held in high regard as they loved one another in such practical ways.

One couple, Ananias and Sapphira, brought a generous gift to the church leaders from the proceeds of the sale of a piece of property. In order to present themselves as selfless and generous, they said that the amount they gave was the full amount they had received for the sale. It wasn’t. They had kept some aside for themselves. They were free to keep a portion if they desired, but they were not free to lie about it. Immediately, they both died.

We might think that God, and His church, should have been grateful for such a substantial gift. What is the big deal? Purity is a big deal! They had lied to the Spirit, who is God. God desires honesty. He looks on the heart. He owns everything and needs nothing. He would not countenance lies and deceit that were used in order to promote self. God is not a respecter of persons, preferring those who give much over those who contribute less. The Lord looks at the heart, perceiving the motives of every giver.

Every act of worship must come from a heart of worship. Gifts and offerings that are given with the desire to receive praise from men are not worship. Even generosity, when coupled with dishonesty, is evil. Every offering must come from a clean heart as we worship our holy God.

Reading for Next Week: Acts 5:1-11