

SC#5: ACTS 2:42-47 THE POWER OF ONE

REDWOODS – 300-350 tall – 30-32.5 wide at the base 2-3k years old – STAYING POWER

ROOTED TOGETHER – BEAUTY MAY BE ABOVE – BUT THE STRENGTH IS BELOW

- **Root structure – endure storms, hard to uproot – MANY TREES – THEY R 1**
 - o **E PLURIBUS UNUM**

The church will withstand and influence an adverse culture if we are unified as one.

ACTS 2:42

WE NEED TO REMEMBER THAT CHRISTIANITY IS PRIMARILY A RELATIONAL, NOT INSTITUTIONAL MOVEMENT WHERE LOVE AND UNITY ARE THE GOALS

Institutional Aspect: Organized structures, leaders, and formalized systems of belief, with clergy, rules, rituals, and governance mechanisms

- **Exist to organize and lovingly lead the church worship, grow, reach..**

The church is not a top-down, command-control organization.

- What emerges **TOGETHER PEOPLE** – practices, in commonality, generous sharing, compassion, public, private, gratitude to God, in favor with people ++
 - o EXACTLY WHAT JESUS INTENDED

Colossians 1:19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

NOT SPLINTERED, DIVIDED, FRAGMENTED, INDIVIDUALISTIC -

FAMILY: The goal isn't to join a church – it is to become part of God's family...

1 John 3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

- **NEW PARADIGM:** Love and unity are the key descriptors of a family

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Love and unity aren't a means to an end they are the end.

- We don't love people to witness to them. We witness to them so we can love them. objectify people. Relationships transactional instead of transformational

WE NEED TO CHOOSE AUTHENTICITY AS A STRENGTH, NOT A WEAKNESS

If we believed that there wouldn't be so much hypocrisy in the church today.

- **HYPOCRISY:** not people having struggles with sin, but people acting like they don't, pretending to be something that they aren't..

Scripture honest strengths/weaknesses – public opened homes – weakness/needs –
OPEN HANDS AND OPEN HEARTS WITH ONE ANOTHER

- Authentic = Real / No hypocrisy (play acting – mask wearing) / Sincere
 - o SINCERE: Without wax **CRACKED POTS (don't have to hide it)**
- IDENTITY ISSUE – IDENTITY IS IN CHRIST – SINNERS SAVED BY GRACE

God I may not be who I want to be but thank you that I'm not who I used to be.

Luke 18:11 God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner'

○ **THREAT: Ananias and Saphira – GOD KILLED THEM**

Authenticity is the cornerstone of trust. When you're authentic, you show your true self without pretense or manipulation. This honesty builds trust with others, as they know you're not hiding anything or being deceitful.

WE NEED TO REMEMBER THAT LOVE AND UNITY COME AUTOMATICALLY – THEY ARE DEVELOPED AND DEFENDED

DEVELOPING GREATER CAPACITY LOVE AND UNITY – **PREPARES U JC RETURN**

1 Thessalonian 3:12 May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, ¹³ so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

- WE VALUE THEM SO MUCH WE DEFEND THEM

The body's immune system fights sickness – division, anger, resentment, hurt, bitterness.

- 1. Fix your offense as a precursor to ur worship - Matthew 5:23
- 2. Pursue Forgiveness and Reconciliation – Matthew 6, 18 – **7TIMES?**

Today's Christians resolve conflict by switching churches.

- 3. Identify, Address and if necessary reject the divisive person

Titus 3:10 As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, ¹¹ knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

Romans 16:17 I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. ¹⁸ For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.

When you're in harmony with God you're in harmony with His family.

- THE CROSS: not for us to have fractured relationships

THERE'S BEAUTY AND POWER IN UNITY

Matthew 18:19 Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."