



THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

A S H A K E T H E N A T I O N S D E V O T I O N A L

“May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know you sent me.”
John 17:23

In John Chapter 17, Jesus prays a powerful prayer to His Father for all future believers that reveals something very powerful if we are to take it seriously and put it into practice. Here Jesus prays that His future followers on earth would be brought to 'complete unity' for the crucial reason of successfully representing His purpose for coming to earth.

Since the beginning of creation to the future fulfilment of God's purpose in the world, God's desire has always been for a community that's in harmony with Himself and His perfect will. From the creation of Eve to be a companion for Adam, all the way through to the coming together of the early church, we see that a purposeful community struggles to survive without unity and a bond of peace made possible only through the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself said in John 13 that our love for one another would be a distinctive sign of our relationship with Him. Therefore, our actions with one another certainly speak louder than our words.

If unity is somewhere at the top of God's agenda, then it would not be far wrong to assume that disunity is equally at the top of the devils! 1 John 3:8 makes it clear that Jesus came to earth to destroy Satan's work. Whilst the redemptive work was finished on the cross through the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we should never forget that Satan's continued 'work initiatives' will always carry an underlying objective to create division in our relationship with God as well as each other.

Today, if there's anything we can do to destroy the devil's work and see souls won for the Kingdom of God, it can only begin to take place by our commitment to authentic unity and true partnership with one another. Jesus said in Matthew 18:20 that "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." Jesus wasn't suggesting that our physical meeting together was the key to a breakthrough but rather that our hearts are of one accord in both spirit and truth. In Acts 2, we see that the Holy Spirit was poured out when the followers came together in one place, but the 'gathering' certainly didn't stop there!

Acts 2:46-47 goes on to describe the early church as one being devoted to meeting together, but more importantly with 'sincere hearts'. As a result, it goes on to say that the Lord added to their numbers those who were being saved! Unity with sincerity is what God is looking for, and with it, we will see the fruit of an authentic community that has the power to effectively reach the world for Jesus and see souls saved!

As Paul urged the church in Ephesus to maintain the unity of the Spirit, may we, too, make this a priority for our own faith and ministries to see God move in a mighty way!