

Partnership Buy In

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[0:00] Today I'm going to talk about partnership buy-in. This is our third sermon in our partnership series, third of four. Partnership buy-in. So a partner is someone we count on, someone who is bought in.

So when we talk about partnership or membership, we're talking about buy-in. People who bought into the mission and vision of our church in such a way that we can count on them. Okay? So 1 Corinthians 6, 19-20 says, You are not your own.

You were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. So we have been bought by Jesus, therefore we buy in. Okay? Matthew 13, 44 says, The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up.

Then in his joy, he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Okay? 2 Corinthians 12, 15 says, I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls.

We buy in joyfully. We've been bought, therefore we buy in. We see this treasure of the kingdom of heaven. And we realize that it's going to cost us everything to buy in.

[1:06] And we say, this is a great deal. My all for his all? I mean, it feels like a ripoff for him, you know? It's like this is, in my joy, I've said, yeah, I'll sell all for, of course I will.

Of course I will. Of course I'm going to do that. That's why Paul could say in 2 Corinthians 12, 15, I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. Now you think about church, you think about your church involvement over the years.

Could you say with Paul the same thing? Could you say, I will most gladly be spent and be, I'll most gladly spend and be spent for your souls?

Do you have that same attitude? Have you had that same attitude? Are you a little gun shy at this point? Are you saying, well, I did have that kind of mentality. I did gladly spend and wanted to gladly be spent.

But I know it costs a lot. It costs a lot. And yes, it does. And so we have to be, in order to have that gladly, in order to have us have that in his joy, he sold all, we've got to see the treasure.

[2:13] We've got to treasure Christ. We've got to treasure who he is, what he's done. And when we do that, we buy in joyfully. All right? So hopefully that is the goal that we would all be able to say with Paul.

I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. I'll gladly give of what I have, and I'll gladly give of who I am. I gladly spend and be spent.

All right? So with that, we're talking basically about buying in or partnering in the mission. So the definition of partner means a person who takes part in an activity with another.

One who shares. One who shares a task with another. Or one who shares ownership with another. You could say a part owner. All right? A partner is someone we can count on to share priorities, to share vision, and to share responsibility.

If we have different priorities, then we can't partner. We have different priorities that we can't partner. If you treasure one thing and I treasure another, then our hearts will go in two different directions.

[3:19] Because Matthew 6.21 says, where your treasure is there, your heart will be also. So partnership means we have shared priorities. Your priority is my priority. We share them, and therefore our heart is going in the same direction.

You can try to put your heart in a direction where you're not treasuring. You can try to put your heart in an area where you are not prioritizing. It will not follow. Because Matthew 6.21 is the word of God, and it's true.

Right? Where your treasure is there, your heart will follow. If you treasure the kingdom of God, you treasure Jesus, then your heart will follow there. And all the people who are treasuring that reality, all their hearts follow together, and there's unity.

Okay? If we have different visions of how our priorities flesh out, then we can't partner with one another. Okay? Because we have two visions, or the word you would use for that is division.

Division. And a house divided against itself cannot stand. This is Mark 3.25. Okay? And so, if we say, yeah, same priorities. I prioritize the kingdom, you prioritize the kingdom.

[4:20] Awesome. But I have this vision of how that flesh is out, and you have this vision of how that flesh is out. If we have two visions, it's never going to work. And maybe you've actually been a part of it.

I've been a part of a church like that. Both prioritizing the kingdom, but two totally different visions. And guess what? That church did not stand. It can't. It couldn't.

Because they were going in two different directions. All right? Okay? So, lastly, if we have the same priorities and the same vision of how those priorities flesh out, but we don't share the responsibility or share the load, then we can't truly partner with one another.

If one of us thinks we don't belong or that we don't need each other, then we can't partner because we're alone and partnership is togetherness. Okay?

So, if one of us is thinking, you know, I don't need other people, or I don't need you, or you don't essentially need me, I don't really belong, then there's no partnership.

[5:19] There has to be, when there's this truly seeing the need for one another, we have real partnership. Amos 3.3 in the New King James Version says, can two walk together unless they are agreed?

No. It's a rhetorical question. So, we talk about this because we want to be agreed. We want to have the same mind. And two can't walk together unless they're agreed. If we're not agreed on the same priorities, we're going nowhere together.

If we're not agreed on the same vision of how those priorities get fleshed out, we are not going anywhere together. And if we don't agree that it's a together thing, it ain't happening. Okay?

Philippians 1.27 says, Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.

That's the goal. That's the goal of partnership. Standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel. That's what we're after. And we should be after that.

Because that's what we're commanded to in scripture in Philippians 1.27. Our mission is the kingdom of God and all of life together. Kingdom of God and all of life together.

[6:34] Okay? A partner is someone we can count on to seek first the kingdom and all of life together. A partner is someone who prioritizes first the king of the kingdom.

If it's not first, then it's not partnership. Can you be counted on to seek the kingdom first? Or are some things more important? Are you truly, fully bought into the priority of the kingdom of God? A partner is someone who prioritizes first the king of the kingdom in all of life. Okay? Not part of life. Not most of life. If it's just part of your life, then it's not partnership.

Because there's not equal buy-in. Okay? If someone is in part way and another person is in all the way, we don't have equal buy-in. We don't have partnership. So the question is, can you be counted on to seek first the kingdom in all of life?

Or are some things off limits to the church and to Jesus? Are you fully bought in in all of your life? Thirdly, a partner is someone who prioritizes first the king of the kingdom in all of life together.

[7:42] If you're on your own, then it's not partnership. If you're just doing things on your own terms, in your own way, it's not partnership. Can you be counted on to seek first the kingdom together? Are you fully bought in on the concept of togetherness?

Okay? Our partners are the ones we count on, those who are dependable and reliable. 2 Timothy 2.2 talks about entrusting to reliable men. Reliable. We're looking for reliable people.

Because this is the kind of people that Paul was looking for. This is the kind of people they're looking for in the Bible. We have to entrust things to reliable people. The church, for it to be strong, for it to be what God has called it to be, means people who are reliable.

Are you reliable? And some would say that Christchurch asks too much. And to them I would ask this question. Is your problem with Christchurch? Or is it with Jesus?

Is partnership God's idea? Or is it a Christchurch idea? Partnership is essentially expecting of people what Jesus expects of people. I'm not asking you to do anything.

[8:44] I'm not expecting anything. That I'm not basing on the scriptures that Jesus is already asking us. Okay? I'm asking you to expect and to give yourself in the way that the Bible is commanding us to do it.

So let's look at these three non-negotiables for partnership. Okay? Number one, share priorities. Share priorities of the kingdom of God. Which essentially is treasuring Christ and his rule. Right? Treasuring Christ and his rule. Jesus taught that we should seek first the kingdom of God and that our hearts follow what we treasure. So Matthew 6.33. That's why I said we can't just seek it partially or to a great degree.

The Bible says seek first the kingdom of God. And otherwise prioritize the kingdom of God. That should be our priority. And then Matthew 6.21. He says where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

So if you treasure the king and the kingdom, your heart will be following the king and his kingdom. Okay? So the kingdom was a big deal. Number one, because Jesus said to seek it first.

[9:46] But what else do we see? Well, after Jesus had died on the cross and rose again, he's got 40 days left with the disciples. You think, okay, Jesus knows this.

It wasn't like a surprise. Like, I don't know when I'm out of here. No, he knew he had 40 days. So basically, he has this 40-day conference with Jesus. Okay? So what would, the conference speaker is Jesus.

How many days? 40 days. You think, he's got 40 days with the disciples. What topic is he going to talk about? Acts 1.3. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during 40 days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

This is his last days with his disciples. This is all he's got. What does he choose to speak about? The first priority, the kingdom of God. Do you see it as a first priority? Paul was very similar in this. In Acts 19, verse 8, it says, He entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. In fact, Paul, at the end of his life, in Acts 28, verses 30 to 31, he was living in house arrest, right?

[10:58] He lived there for two whole years at his own expense and welcomed all who came to him. And guess what he was talking about? This is at the end of his life. He knows he doesn't have much time left. He was talking about this in his letters.

And what does he proclaim in those last two years of his life? It says, he welcomed all who came to him and he proclaimed the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is the first priority.

So that begs the question, what is the kingdom? Jack Taylor calls it God's rule over everyone and everything for all time and eternity. God's rule over everyone and everything for all time and eternity.

Wolfgang Simpson calls it the realm of God's uncontested rule. The realm of God's uncontested rule. Or you can just look at the word itself, kingdom. So king means rule.

Domain. Dom. The dom comes from domain. So the domain of the king's rule. Okay? The domain of the king. Or if you look at Matthew 6.10, it says, Your kingdom come, your will be done.

[12:00] You can describe the kingdom as what the king wants, the way he wants it. What the king wants, the way he wants it. And in each kingdom, there's three parts. There's the ruler.

There's the ruled. And there's the rules. Okay? Jesus is the ruler. Those who obey his rules are living as if he's the ruler and are living like the ruled.

Okay? That's the kingdom. When you seek first the kingdom, when you value the kingdom as a priority, it's going to look a certain way. It's going to look a certain way. It's going to look like submission to Jesus because he's the king.

He's not. We don't get to put all these other labels on him. It's not like you can, quote unquote, accept him as one thing and not accept him as Lord and king. You can't break Jesus into little parts and just take whatever's palatable to you.

He is who he is all the time. And one of the things he is is the king, the ruler, the Lord. All right? So, shared priorities of the kingdom of God. We want to share the priorities of the kingdom of God because this is clearly a priority in the Bible.

[13:05] So, what does good fruit of shared priorities and treasuring Christ and his kingdom look like? It looks like being a water disciple, water baptized. You ever heard of water discipleship?

Being a water baptized disciple of Jesus. Okay? Water baptized disciple of Jesus. Why? Because Jesus said to. And because discipleship to Jesus means you're king.

I want to come underneath your teaching, your yoke, your rule. It looks like the fear of the Lord and ongoing sanctification. Being saved. Okay? Jesus said we've been saved from the penalty of sin, but we're being saved from the power of sin.

That's what sanctification is. And we will be saved from the presence of sin. Good fruit of shared priority of the kingdom and treasuring Christ and his kingdom. It looks like a life that's primarily orientated around the kingdom of God.

Okay? Where everything is orientated around the kingdom of God. It looks like serving the church is a joy, not a burden. It looks like valuing what the church values. Okay?

[14:08] Having the same priorities. What does bad fruit of shared priorities and treasuring Christ and his kingdom look like? It looks like a pattern of on your own terms instead of on Christ terms.

If we're saying, well, I want to do what Jesus wants me to do, but I want to do it on my terms. That's not the kingdom. The kingdom is what God wants the way he wants it. And sometimes we say, oh, I want what God wants, but I want it my way.

But if you're doing what he wants and you're not doing it in the way he wants it, then it's not really his way. Okay? So, if there's a pattern of, I want Christ on my own terms, that's not the kingdom of God.

That's not treasuring Christ and his rule. If there's a pattern of seeking your own interests instead of Christ, that's not good fruit of treasuring the king of the kingdom. Philippians 2.21 says, They all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

Do you know what Christ is interested in? Well, one thing I know for sure he's interested in is this kingdom. Okay? We treasure Christ. To treasure Christ as king is to treasure what the king is interested in.

[15:13] If we say, well, I care more about my interests, that's not fruit of treasuring Christ and his kingdom. Bad fruit would look like a pattern of lack of regard for the Bible. 2 Timothy 3.16 says, All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

Okay? If we're picking and choosing which scriptures we want to believe and which ones we want to adhere to and others we dismiss, that's not a good fruit of saying, hey, you're the king.

Your word is law. Whatever you say goes. Bad fruit would look like a pattern of apathy or lack of effort, cold, lukewarm, standoffish, distant, lazy.

Hebrews 3.12 says, Bad fruit would look like a pattern of knowing the good you ought to do but not doing it.

James 4.17. He who knows the good you ought to do and doesn't do it sins. Okay? If you say, I treasure Christ and his kingdom, what he says goes. I want to do it and I want to do it quickly. We say this to our kids, right?

[16:19] I don't want you just to obey. I want you to obey quickly. And we should do the same thing with the king of kings. If we have that much authority as parents to expect our kids to obey quickly, how much more does the king of all kings have the authority to ask of us that we would obey quickly?

Bad fruit would look like a pattern of picking and choosing which meetings are important and then not showing up or being inconsistent or you're just sick or tired very often so that you're just giving up meeting with one another.

Time equals a relationship. All right? When we treasure Christ and his kingdom, we treasure the gathering of his saints in the context of church. Bad fruit would look like a pattern of sin, like a hidden or habitual sin where you're locked into it.

It's like you can't say, I'm partnered with you in the kingdom, but I really am not willing to let go of the sin or I'm living in hidden sin or I'm living in not hidden sin, but I'm just not willing to let it go. I'm not walking in repentance, which by the way, confession is not repentance. In fact, you confess it every week or you confess it often with your brothers or your sisters. That is not repentance.

[17:23] Repentance says, I treasure the king. I treasure what he says, and I will denounce this and move away from it. I'm turning away from it, turning towards Christ. Bad fruit of not having shared priorities would be you're unreliable.

You can't be trusted. Psalm 15 verse 4 says that the man who ascends the hill of the Lord keeps his word even when it hurts, even at great cost, says in the CSB, right?

Whatever the cost. Bad fruit would look like a pattern of being unteachable, stubborn, prideful.

Proverbs 12 verse 1 says he who hates reproof is stupid.

Okay, so it looks like not being stupid. Right? You're taking correction. You're listening to people correcting you. Bad fruit could look like a pattern of bad parenting, where you're just not disciplining your kids, and your kids are out of control.

I know Samir said his kids are crazy. That's good. Well, we need to talk to Samir and say, let's get them to discipline your kids. Right? Just kidding. He said that during the Lord's Day. We'll be missing. No, but it looks like us saying, hey, if I love my kids, I'm diligent to discipline.

[18:31] Okay? Because the king says to do that. His word says to do that. It looks like a bad fruit would look like a pattern of not relating around Jesus. Christ's lack of value for the church.

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for it, says in Ephesians 5.25. And Acts 20.28 says, which he obtained with his own blood, the church of God. And it looks like having a love for his church.

And just really treasuring Christ. You know, we've had before people say, I want to partner with the church. And the interesting thing is they've been gathering with us for months. We've been fellowshiping. And sometimes what ends up happening is they're really nice people that have a lot of nice fruit.

You know, like nice and warm people. And yet if you think about it, there's sometimes you meet a person who's a really nice person, but you've never heard them once talk about Jesus. That they're actually treasuring Jesus.

Loving Jesus. Enjoying Jesus. You've never seen them get even tender and just think, I love him. I care about him. Like this is the most important thing in my life is Jesus.

[19:34] When you have really good people, really nice people who never talk about Jesus, we're never going to have partnership with those kind of people. We can't. Because our partnership is in Christ. Not being nice people.

There's a lot of nice people in the world. There's nothing authentically, distinctly Christian about being a nice person. And sometimes people can end up being nicer than Jesus.

So there's a problem with that as well. So what we want to do is be people who treasure Jesus, not just nice people. Jesus will make us kind. Jesus will give us the fruit of the Spirit.

But we want to have that because we're related to Christ, not just because we're church-going good folk. All right? Number two, shared vision in all of life. Okay? If we're partners together, we have shared vision that it's an all-of-life thing.

So always fully in all things. Where does that come from? 1 Corinthians 15, 58. It says, Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

[20:33] That verse is very all-encompassing. How often? Always. How much should I give myself? Fully. Fully. To what? To the work of the Lord. Why?

Because your labor in the Lord is not in vain. It's covering it all, right? How much? When? Why? Always give yourself fully to the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. God is requiring us to be all-in, to be an all-of-life thing. We see this in Ephesians 1, 22. It says, God placed all things under his feet and appointed him, speaking of Christ, to be head over everything for the church.

Seth just taught about this, right? He placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church. And so here's the deal. Do you believe that? Do you believe that all things are under his feet?

Not just the things you want to be under his feet. Not just the things that are easy to be under his feet. And that he's head over everything in your life. He's head over your bank account.

[21:34] He's head over your sex life. He's head over your speech. He's head over your thoughts. He is head over everything. When we believe that, we say it's an all-of-life thing.

I don't get to give you part of my life. I don't get to give you this little bit or what I like. I don't get to do what I want, when I want, how I want, the way I want. I do what you want, the way you want it. All the time.

I always give myself fully because all things are under your feet. And you are head over everything for the church. For the church. Why? For the church.

So if we're going to do church together, it has to be under the headship of Christ. And if you say, well, I want to give God my whole life. In other words, he said, well, he can have most of my life. We have no partnership with each other.

We can't. We can't. Mark 8.35. Jesus says, whoever would save his life will lose it. Whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it.

[22:34] For my sake and the gospels will save it. There's a losing of all things for Christ. And there's great unity around that. There's great fellowship and partnership around that. So much so that it causes us to use the language of 1 Thessalonians 2 verse 8.

This is such great language. It causes us to be affectionately desirous of one another. This is the language of Paul. He says, so being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you, not only the gospel of God, because that's what you do as a Christian, right?

You share the gospel. He's saying, I didn't just want to share the gospel with you. I was so affectionately desirous of you. I didn't want to just share the gospel, but our very lives. Because you would become very dear to us.

This is what partnership looks like. It doesn't just look like Sunday morning pleasantries, you know, where we talk to each other and we enjoy just saying hi to each other, catching up with each other. It involves a sharing of life with one another.

Why? Because this is church. Because this is what blood-bought sinners do. They buy in. They buy in. And they become affectionately desirous of one another. They're saying, Sunday morning's not enough.

[23:39] I can't do that. And I can't read the scriptures and think that Sunday morning's enough. Because I don't see that anywhere in the scriptures. To do that as betrayal of the king, I say, is my priority. The king and the kingdom that I say that I treasure.

To say, I treasure the king and the kingdom, but I don't treasure the way that his kingdom should be manifest, is to not truly treasure the kingdom. Acts chapter 20, verse 20 and verse 24.

In verse 20, it says that they were teaching, he was teaching in public and from house to house. So it wasn't just the Sunday gathering on the Lord's Day. It was also house to house.

It wasn't just this once a week thing they did. It was also house to house. And what was the undergirding principle behind this costly effort of meeting on Sundays and meeting from house to house?

What was behind that? Paul said in Acts 20, 24, I do not account my life of any value, nor is precious to myself. If only I may finish my course in the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

[24:44] He says, I don't account my life of any value nor precious to myself. The ones who've been bought buy in. The ones who've been bought and say, I don't even count my life of any value. I've been bought and my life's not my own anymore.

They're able to meet publicly and from house to house because their life's not their own. When your life is your own, you say, but I'm tired. When your life is your own, you say, but the kids go to bed at this time.

When your life is your own, you say, I don't really like those people. When your life is your own, you come up with all kinds. I got this project and this project to do. And sometimes those things are legitimate.

But a lot of times they're just excuses for us to say, I'm really not accounting of my life. I actually count my life of a lot of value. And it is very precious to myself.

And I don't really want to give it to you. And if that's the case, then we don't impart. And this is why Paul is such a great example of this. Because in 1 Corinthians 9, 22, he says, I've become all things to all people that by all means I might save some.

[25:44] That's flexibility. That's cost. That's buy-in. He was bought, therefore he bought in. And he said, I want to see people won to Christ so badly. I've become all things to all people that I could win as many people as possible by all means.

Do you have that same mentality? Because the church isn't for us. A church that's not on mission is a church that's dying. And there's so many dying churches that look vibrant because there's a lot of people there.

But they're slowly dying from the inside out because they're not on mission. All right? That's why we have to be the kind of people who are bought in because we've been bought inside. No, we are

always people who are giving ourselves fully to the work of the Lord.

And at the end of the day, what's really true about church is that church becomes weird when Christ is in your life. Colossians 3, verse 4 says, It's Christ who is your life. You want to have a weird version of church?

Try to do Christ where he's not your life. Because it doesn't work that way. Church was designed around the person of Christ. And if he's not your life, if he's just part of your life, you have no fellowship with those who he is their whole life.

[26 : 51] Our unity, our partnership is a shared vision of an all of life thing. For Jesus is our life. Always fully in all things. Okay? The good fruit of this, of this kind of all of life thing, is going to look like three things.

An open, vulnerable heart. Okay? I'm able to open up my heart with you. Share my heart with you. Why? Because I've been bought. I don't have any self-protect mechanisms. I'm not trying to save my life.

I've lost my life. I'm not just opening up the windows and letting you see in. I'm opening up the doors well so that you can come in and speak into my life. Alright? I'm saying, I have an open and vulnerable heart.

I have everything in Christ, therefore I have nothing to lose. Everything you have in Christ, you're free to lose everywhere else. If you don't have something in Christ, you're not free to lose it everywhere else. But the truth is you do have everything you need in Christ.

It looks like an open, hospitable home. Okay? You look all throughout the scriptures, you see verses encouraging towards hospitality. You see people meeting in their homes.

[27 : 53] Alright? If we want to have real fellowship and partnership with one another, we have to open up our homes to one another. Not just our open heart, but an open home. You have one without the other, it gets weird. You have an open heart, but your home's never open.

It's like, how are we ever going to get to know each other? You have an open heart, but not an open home? It's like, I don't really like coming over by you. It's just kind of weird. There's no fellowship. There's no reality together. And then lastly, an open, flexible schedule.

Open homes, open hearts, open schedule. If I say, yeah, my heart is open, my home is open, but my schedule's not, who cares if you have an open heart and an open home if no one ever gets to enjoy it?

My heart's open, and it's like a good strategy. Oh yeah, my heart is wide open. My home is wide open. You just can never come over. You can never come in because I'm too busy. Like, that doesn't make any sense.

There's no practicality to that. There has to be an open schedule to facilitate the experience of the open home and the open heart. And that costs. They all cost.

[28 : 52] They're all highly dangerous. Putting your heart out like that? What if somebody stomps on it? Listen, it isn't what if. It's when. Do you understand? It's when.

It will get stomped on. Did your Savior's heart get stomped on multiple times by people? Does he always put his heart out there? Of course. And he calls us to be disciples of him.

It's going to happen. But what you have in Christ, you're free to lose everywhere else. So if you're accepted in Christ, you're free to be rejected. If you're loved by Christ, you're free to be unloved. If you're cared for in Christ, you're free to be not cared for.

If you're regarded by Christ, you're free to be disregarded. This is huge. Good fruit of just believing, hey, I've been bought, therefore I buy in.

So I have an open home, an open heart, an open schedule. What would bad fruit of this look like? What pattern of not laying down your life? Luke 9.23 says, He said to all, If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

[29 : 52] Deny himself. The discipleship to Jesus looks like self-denial. We can't have this if we're not denying ourselves. It would look like a pattern of not being open or vulnerable, where certain things are off limits.

And this happens all the time. It's like, well, I'll let you in here, but this far no more. You can get into this room in my proverbial heart, but not there.

I'm not going there, and you are certainly not going there with me. Listen to the language of 2 Corinthians 6 and 7. We have spoken freely to Corinthians. This is the language of Paul.

We have spoken freely to Corinthians. Our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections.

In return, I speak as to children, widen your hearts also. And then in 7 verse 2, he says, Make room in your hearts for us. This is the language of the apostle. This is the language of church planting.

[30 : 48] This is the language of establishing a church, is that it's wide open hearts. And he says to them, you are restricted in your own affections. I want to ask you, are any of you restricted in your affections for one another?

Is there restrictions? What are those restrictions? We need to repent of those restrictions. That is keeping. We have to understand that if Jesus lives in our heart through faith, which is what the Bible says, and he lives in my heart through faith, and then he lives in your heart through faith, then the way we exchange the love, wisdom, and power of God is through open hearts, where the substance of King Jesus is exchanged in the familial relationships we have that are conducted in the context of open homes, open hearts, and open schedules.

The love, wisdom, and power of Jesus exchanged through open hearts, unrestricted open hearts. But you're saying, make room in your heart for me. I'm not restricted in my flow towards you, but I'm feeling a restriction in yours towards me.

In the same way, open wide your hearts. You see this? This is what the Bible teaches. Baptism, this will look like a pattern of not welcoming or, not being welcoming or hospitable.

Romans 12, 13 says, contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Seek to show hospitality. Not, well, if it comes along, show hospitality. It says, seek to show hospitality.

[32 : 14] How many of us are seeking to show hospitality? We're looking for opportunities to show hospitality. Not like, hey, can we meet at your house? Yeah, I guess. There's no partnership in that.

Partnership is, hey, when people are fighting over, no, let's meet at our house. No, actually, we're gonna, let's go over to our house. You always have people over. What are we doing at our house this time? No, no, no. We're doing it at my house.

And then it's like a brawl and people are fighting over it. No, I'm just kidding. We're doing it at my house. We're doing it at my house. We're doing it at my house. That's like seeking hospitality. Are you seeking it? Are you seeking, say, no, I wanna open up my heart, my home, my life to people. Bad food looks like a pattern of being fake or being a poser or being duplicitous. It would look like a pattern of being inflexible or just a pattern of different vision and house divided cannot stand.

Okay, so that's just the relating to each other and the shared vision of all of life. Do we have that together? And that's partnership. And then thirdly, the last one, shared responsibility, the togetherness.

[33 : 13] That true partnership. When we've been bought, we buy into a sense of shared responsibility. Have you ever tried to do something really important on your own with a bunch of people who weren't bought in as much as you?

Isn't that fun? No, nobody says that's fun, right? It's like, I'm really into this. I'm bought in. I value it. I love it. And I got my friends a part of it, but I'm the only one bearing responsibility.

That's a bad experience, right? Nobody likes that. Because you're going to get, it's formula for burnout. It's formula for disappointment.

Shared responsibility is huge. It's huge. So we want to have true partnership. We can't just be rallied around our priorities and a vision of how they're fleshed out.

We've got to each, because we've been bought, buy into a shared responsibility, an equal level of buy-in, right? Basically just saying that we're not letting people do things alone.

[34 : 12] We're saying, I belong to you and I have need of you. I belong to you and I have need of you. That's what shared responsibility says. Okay, this is 1 Corinthians 12, right? You have the two indictments of 1 Corinthians 12 about seeing the church as a body.

The first one was people saying, because I'm not this, that, or the other, I don't belong. So disqualifying yourself causes a lack of shared responsibility. Like, I'm not good enough.

I can't do this. I, yada, yada, yada. I'm not like so-and-so. And then the other one was, I have no need of you. So one is disqualifying yourself. The other one is rejecting other people. Like, I don't need you.

I'm fine myself. I don't want to do this with you. Okay? Both of those things were working and causing the body to be handicapped. The opposite needs to be true. I belong to you and I have need of you.

That's shared responsibility. Romans 12, 5 says, though we are many in one body in Christ, we're individually members one of another. Acts 2, 44 says, all who believed were together and have all things in common.

[35 : 14] Luke 10, verse 1, when he sent out the disciples, did he send them out one by one? No. Sent them out what? Two by two. Together. Together. Ecclesiastes 4.

People like to read this in the context of marriage, but think of this in the context of church. Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow.

But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up. Again, if two lie together, they keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him.

A threefold cord is not quickly broken. This is clearly showing the value of togetherness and not being alone. The church must be a people who are committed, who fight for togetherness.

Romans 15.30, Paul's appealing to his brothers saying, By our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf.

[36 : 16] Strive together in prayer. You ever had a group of people that you can regularly count on to strive together in prayer? 1 Corinthians 12.26 says, If one part suffers, we all suffer.

If one part rejoices, we all rejoice together. Okay? So if one part suffers, we all suffer together. One part rejoices, we all rejoice together. It looks like rejoicing together and suffering together.

That's partnership. If you suffer and you feel like you're the only one suffering and no one's suffering with you, that's not partnership. And likewise, if you rejoice and people aren't rejoicing with you, that's not partnership.

Both are super lame. Both of them are, right? Like, suffering alone, that's incredibly lame. But you know what else is also very lame? Like, rejoicing alone.

Like, that's a travesty. Have you ever had people who are more excited for you than you are excited for you? That's awesome. You want that. That's the kind of fellowship and partnership we're looking for.

[37 : 18] 2 Corinthians 7.2-3 says, Make room in your hearts for us. You are in our hearts to die together and to live together. To die together and to live together.

Again, strong language. Ephesians 2.22, In him you are also being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Hebrews 10.25 says, Not neglecting to meet together.

Philippians 4.3 says, Help these women who have labored side by side with me in the gospel.

Together, right? It's a constant language of togetherness. You see this in the scriptures.

Some of you have probably seen this many times, but some of us maybe haven't. It's littered all throughout. This is just a little sampling. Togetherness is woven throughout the life of the church and the scriptures.

And it must be among us as well. What is that called? It's called shared responsibility. It's called equal buy-in. Saying, I'm not just going to let you buy in. I'm bought in too. We were both bought by the same Savior.

[38 : 17] Right? I don't need Jesus any less than you do. We need Jesus together and we need each other. Okay? So we're going to do this together. Good fruit of that. Now that looks like owning the identity, mission, and expression of a missional community.

So missional community is where we do the life of our church together. So it looks like, well, it's not just on one person. It's not just on the leader. It's not just whoever's hosting. It's like, I'm going to own the identity and the mission and the expression of this missional community just as much as anyone else.

That's partnership. Now, your gift's going to flesh out differently than somebody else's. That doesn't mean you can't own the whole thing in the same way. It's like, no, the identity of this, the expression of this, the mission of this, I'm in.

I want to contribute to it. I want to help discover what that is together. That's what partnership looks like. It looks like regular Sunday morning service, participation, and serving. Why?

Because we meet every Sunday and the Lord's Day and we want to make sure that no one's getting burnt out in that and that we are facilitating that experience together to worship the Lord and be encouraged by one another. It looks like regular corporate prayer meeting participation because this house is a house of prayer and we need to strive together in prayer.

[39:27] There's so many things we need to cry out for. It looks like regular financial support of the church's mission by joyfully giving according to income. Again, where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. In the past, when I've seen different people leave the church and churches that I've been a part of, I think almost every church I've been a part of I'm involved with finances at some point.

And you can always see this trend that when people will leave the church, before they would leave the church, they would stop giving. Makes sense, right? Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. And so, we're not asking you to put your money in something that's not valuable.

We're saying God values His church and it costs money to do His church and we're saying, hey, give of your money financially. That's partnership. Someone says, well, I'm partnered in every way and then you look, it's like, you're not giving financially.

You're not bought in. You're withholding and that's not okay. This isn't your money anyways. It's the Lord's. He's calling you to be a steward and He's calling you to give some of this to the Lord.

Okay? It looks like a good reputation and a demonstrated effort to be at peace with all men. Okay? Good fruit of togetherness looks like using our spiritual gifts while also recognizing and receiving the spiritual gifts in others.

[40:39] So some people like to do the first and forget the second. It's like, oh yeah, man. Can't wait to be part of this church so I get to use my gifts. What about all the other gifts? How high are you on receiving their gifts? Well, I mean, they aren't as important as mine.

You know, I mean, come on, let's get real about this. No, like, they're all important. They're all important. And so if someone just is like, hey, can't wait to be part of your church so I get to use my gift, I'm kind of like, remember all the rest of the people?

Like, what about receiving their gift and enjoying their gift? Like, do you see that you need that? Some people don't see that. It looks like verbally building up the church, committing to ongoing training, submission to Christ Church leadership.

Looks like, and then in our context, it looks like a once a month partnership meeting attendance.

This is how we keep together as partners and are on the same page and lead the church together.

Bad fruit together, what would that look like? It would look like a pattern of being an independent loner. Proverbs 18, verse 1 says, whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire and he breaks out against all sound judgment.

[41:46] Breaks out against all sound judgment. Seen this so often. People just, they want to do things on their own terms and they're isolated and then it's just like, set your watch at some point in time.

You're going to see them exhibiting very poor judgment. It's like, how did this happen? What do you mean, how did this happen? You've isolated yourself. You've broken out against all, you're seeking your own desire and you've broke out against all sound judgment.

The Bible says this. There's no mystery to this. There's no mystery to this. We can't be independent loners. We need one another and we need one another to help us to strengthen our weaknesses, right?

And to be there for one another when we go through hard times and we grieve things and we have difficulty in things and we can't carry things on our own. Bad fruit of togetherness would be a pattern of being entitled.

You know, people often say, man, I wish people would do this or I wish people would have me over more often. Well, there's a verse in the Bible that addresses this. It's great. Jesus said in Luke 6, 31, as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

[42:50] So people are like, I wish people would have me over. Are you having people over? You start. Have people over. This is what the Bible says. As you wish that others would do to you. Get that list. Go through your entitlement list.

Like, what are all the things I wish that other people would do to me? Like, finally, the preacher's talking about this. I'm glad. This is great. Yeah, let's look at that list. Now, you do that to everybody else. Whoa, whoa, whoa. I don't want them to do that to me.

No, you do that. Jesus said this. As you wish that others would do to you, do so to them and do it without expecting anything in return. Do it without expecting anything in return.

But you start with you. We're not entitled people. We've been bought. We've been bought. So we buy in. Jesus has given us everything. What's the big deal if we give and we're not giving back to?

Really? We have all the treasures of Christ. What would he do? Like, someone didn't give us something. We didn't get the friendship. We didn't get the invite. We didn't get the love. We have Christ.

[43:46] A person who majors on that does not know what they have in Christ. It looks like a bad fruit of togetherness would be like bad or no communication.

Right? Communing is the key. I'm sorry. Communication is the key to communing. There's a reason those two prefixes are in the word together. They're in the word together in the word communication or communing.

Right? They go together. And some people think, I just don't understand why I don't have this togetherness of people. It's like, bro, you don't return calls. You don't return texts like three weeks later.

It's like, the thing already happened that we were talking about. He's like, I just don't feel close to anybody. You don't get back to people. You can't be counted on. If I text you, I have no idea I'm going to hear from you.

Right? You might say, well, we don't need to be getting back. Yeah, some people are unreasonable. It's like, they send you a text and like a minute later, like, hope you didn't get back to me. It's like, what are you talking about? I didn't even see your text yet.

[44:45] I'm working. I have a job. So, like, we're not being unreasonable, but we also have to be expecting that if we want to commune with one another and be together with one another, there has to be communication.

Bad fruit would be a pattern of not looking to others' interests. Philippians 2, 4-7 said, each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others in the same mind of Christ. It would look like a pattern of no shared responsibility, no we.

I can always tell when someone is really bought in when they start using the language of we when they talk about the church. And they keep saying, your church, your church, and it's like, we're still corving here.

We're still getting to know each other. That's cool. That's fine. I mean, I'm patient. That's great. But then when someone starts saying we, I'm like, oh, okay. So togetherness here. You're using we. I love this.

I feel like there's some ownership here. That you can listen for that. You can tell it totally. And again, I'm not, there's not even criticism for that. You're not going to just walk into a new church and be like, we, man, we're together.

[45:44] It's like, I don't even know you. I don't even know you. Like, it takes time. But eventually, if there's true partnership, the language starts changing to we and our. Okay? Bad fruit would look like a pattern of making excuses and not taking responsibility.

A pattern of being critical or condescending or harsh or opinionated. Galatians 5, 14 to 15 says, the whole law is fulfilled in one word. You shall love your neighbors yourselves. But if you bite, devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

Partnership can, that's to build each other up. It can't look like devouring one another. Romans 15, verse 1 says, a harsh word stirs up anger. Okay? So, partnership means that we're talking well with one another.

Bad fruit looks like a pattern of being fragile, easily offended, or overly sensitive. It's really tough to be together when that's there. Or it looks like a pattern of not being able to receive and always having to be the one who's giving.

Okay? That's not partnership. There's some people that's like, they won't share, they won't let anybody else give. They won't let anybody else be a resource. That's hard to partner with that person.

[46:52] It's like, hey, listen, you're all, it's cool, you're really generous and everything, but if I can't share the love with you, I don't feel any togetherness with you if there's no shared responsibility. So, in closing, a partner is someone who's bought in.

Okay? A partner is someone who's bought in to the degree that we can count on him or her in all three areas of partnership. Share priorities of the kingdom of God, that's treasuring Christ and his rule. Shared vision of all life, always fully in all things, and shared responsibility, togetherness, belonging and needing one another.

Amen? Amen.