

Together, Serving, Winning

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[0:00] Acts chapter 2, verse 44 through 47. And all that believed were together. Everyone say together. And all that believed were together and had all things common and sold their possessions and goods and imparted them to all men as every man had need.

And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

Praising God and having favor with all the people and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Let's pray.

Lord Jesus, I thank you for your word today. I thank you for the theme, the idea, the burden that you've given me for this year, 2026, for disciples of Jesus Christ in Houston.

I pray it's conveyed today. And I pray that this year, Lord, there's changes in a good way, God, that comes from this place, God, through you.

[1:09] In Jesus' name I pray. Let your word penetrate us today. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. If I had a title today, I guess it would be Together, Serving, and Winning.

Together, Serving, and Winning. Amen. You may be seated. If you ever need to be inspired, if you need inspiration in your life, go to the word of the Lord.

Amen. Amen. There's been plenty of times, even recently, that I just need some inspiration. I need some extra gas in the tank, spiritually.

And, of course, we want to practice our spiritual disciplines. But, amen, the word of God is like no other. You can go to the word of God and hear the Lord speak to you on demand.

And today, we have our Bibles, and we have it on our apps and devices, and you can do Google searches. What was that scripture that said this? And easily find it.

[2:07] It's just very easy to be able to search the word of the Lord and find inspiration. And I thank God for that. And I've been inspired by the word of the Lord for this year.

I've been reading stories such as the story of Joshua when he entered and brought the Israelites into the promised land. Where we find that, yes, they're finally in the promised land after 40 years of wandering in a wilderness.

But then they find their first obstacle in the way. And that is a city called Jericho. And then Jericho is a city known for its walls and its defenses.

And it's the first thing that the Israelites have to face in this promised land is to conquer Jericho. And I don't know if you've heard the story or not, and I won't go into a lot of detail.

But the word of the Lord comes to Joshua. And Joshua instructs the people, the priests, and the soldiers, and the people of Israel to do as the Lord had told him.

[3:11] And what the Lord had told him was that they were to encompass the city of Jericho around about. And every day, for six days, they would march one time around the city.

And then on the seventh day, they were to do it seven times. And so at the break of dawn on that seventh day, they would march around the city seven times.

And then the Lord's instructions were for the priests to blow a long blast with the trumpets. And when that would happen, that the people were to shout.

And then God had promised them that if they would do this, that the walls of Jericho would fall. And they would have a great victory. Amen. And that's exactly what happened. They followed the word of the Lord.

They did that. And they had a great victory. I got inspiration also recently from reading Nehemiah, the story of Nehemiah. And these came up during our lessons on the last days.

[4:09] And we learned about Daniel's 70 weeks of prophecies. And part of that is the 69 weeks that have already been fulfilled.

And that's from the time that the beginning of the walls would be rebuilt in Jerusalem. And to the point that Messiah would be cut off was the first 69 weeks of those 70 prophetic weeks. And so this was on my mind again.

And Nehemiah was given the orders to go and rebuild Jerusalem. And they began by rebuilding the walls to give that city protection.

Because it was open and available to raiders or anybody that would come and pillage the people.

And so Nehemiah goes and he is to rebuild these walls that protect the city of Jerusalem.

And it's found out by the enemy that now there's somebody that's come with purpose and intent to rebuild the walls. And so they're upset about this because they want to be able to spoil the Israelites whenever they want.

[5:13] And so they're upset about this. And Nehemiah finds out of their plans to come in between the gaps of the walls that remained and pillage them.

And so Nehemiah has them, all the families of the people of that city would take shifts. And all the families work together. And the Bible talks about how they would have a sword in one hand and a tool in another.

And they would have to work and defend at the same time to rebuild those walls. And I found inspiration in that. And I found inspiration in the story of the birth of the church in Acts chapter 2.

And we read part of that today where, you know, Jesus is crucified. He's resurrected. He appears unto them for 40 days. And then 10 days before Pentecost, he tells them, go in Jerusalem and wait for the promise.

And then he ascended into heaven. And the disciples go back to Jerusalem. And they're waiting for the promise of the Holy Ghost to fall. And it finally does on the day of Pentecost.

[6:20] And it's the birth of the church. And then you get all this revival that goes on. And thousands of souls are saved on that day. And that's inspirational, especially for a church planner.

Amen. We need revival. We want to see souls saved. And it's just inspiration. But when I'm looking at these things, the common theme I'm seeing in the Word of God is that when God's people stick together and when they serve in the kingdom of God, then that's when they win battles that they face in their lives.

Amen. Amen. It's when they win is when they come together and when they serve together. And then the battles are won. Amen. In the example at Jericho, all the people marched around the walls together as a unit.

And there is power in coming together. When Nehemiah rebuilt the walls, we see the family standing side by side together, building and defending. Amen. There's power in coming together.

At the birth of the church, all the people were of one heart and one soul and stayed together as a unit until the Holy Ghost was poured out as promised.

[7:30] And there's power in being together. Amen. And disciples of Jesus Christ today should be in unity together. We should be marching together. Amen.

My family standing with your family. Your family standing with my family. We should all stand together in unity. And we should be a people that come together with a singular purpose and mission.

And that is to escape the darkness of this world that would so happily drag us down. And to make it to heaven together. And bring as many people as we can with us.

Amen. Amen. That's what we need to be doing. That's what we need to be focused on. Amen.

Amen. There is a reason that the first church in the book of Acts, those first disciples of Jesus Christ stuck together.

And that was because of persecution. They were persecuted for their beliefs. They were persecuted for the name of Jesus. And just like Jesus said they would be.

[8:27] And although we're not at the point in time where we would be persecuted in the same way that they were. There is still a darkness in this world.

And there are still forces in this world that absolutely do not want you to live for God. Amen. There's forces in this world that absolutely do not want your soul to be saved.

There's forces in this world that are completely fine for you standing up for whatever you want to stand up for. You can take up any cause you want. You can take up the LGBTQ+.

You can take up pro-abortion. You can take up any kind of cause that you want to take up. And they're fine with it. But as soon as you want to take up the cause of Jesus Christ, then all of a

sudden it's like the world and the devil has something to say about that.

Amen. Nothing aggravates the devil in this world more than somebody that wants to stand up for Jesus and for truth. Amen. But I'm fine aggravating the devil. I'm fine doing that.

[9:31] But the point is that that's the reason they stuck together is because they were persecuted for what they believed. They were persecuted for being people of the name of Jesus. And today we're people of the name of Jesus.

And we're going to come across persecutions for that. Amen. And we need to stick together. And we need to live and go through life together. And that we could encourage each other and exhort one another and build each other up.

Because it's us against the world. Amen. We need to make sure our self is saved. Our family is saved. And those around us are saved. And to save as many people as we can.

But the fact of the matter is it's the world against us. Amen. We're not of this world. And so we need to stick together. Amen. Ephesians 4, 1 through 6 says, I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.

With all lowliness and meekness. With long suffering for bearing one another in love. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.

[10:41] One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is above all and through all and in you all. Amen. We are different people with different backgrounds and different upbringings.

And we are different and diverse in a lot of ways. But as the body of Christ we are to be one. Amen. There's only one body of Christ just like there's only one spirit. Amen.

Just like there's only one God there's only one body of Christ. And united together and we need to be in a singular purpose. And bound together by the same one spirit of God.

Walking in love and walking in peace and having care and concern for one another. Amen. Paul wrote to the church in Corinth. For by one spirit are we all baptized into the body.

For the body is not one member but many. Think about the body. It has many members. And he went on to say that there should be no separation in the body.

[11:47] But that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it. One member be honored.

All the members rejoice with it. And he said now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular. So we have to understand that we're supposed to be a part of the one same body of Christ.

And we are individuals. We have our individualities and our differences and our diversities. But just like a finger is different from a toe, is different from a nose, is different from an ear.

We're all different. But we're supposed to be part of the one same body of Christ. Amen. And when one of us is hurt, it should hurt us all. And when one of us isn't functioning properly, it hurts us all.

The body's not as it should. And when one of us is rejoicing, we should all rejoice. Amen. We are different people, but the same one body of Christ. Psalm 133 and 1 says, Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

[12:55] It's a beautiful thing to God when the body of Christ is fitly joined together. Amen. We have to be together. Coming together in our church services is very important.

Especially in these last times, these last days. Hebrews 10 and 25 says, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another.

And so much more as you see the day approaching. After learning about the day of the Lord for seven weeks, we know what day it's talking about. Amen. Amen. We're very, we're scholarly.

We're a lot further ahead than most Christians after these last seven weeks about what to expect in the end times. And we know that that great day of the Lord is coming and we know that it's coming soon. Amen.

And so this is God's word teaching us not to neglect us coming together as the manner of some is. You know, but God's telling us to make even greater efforts in gathering together as we see the day of his return getting closer.

[14:05] Amen. Amen. At 4 o'clock p.m. on Sundays in Houston should not be up for negotiation on our calendar. Amen. It's more important than family gatherings.

It's more important than holidays to celebrate. It's more important than entertainment and vacations and what you could experience there. It's more important than your source of income.

It's more important than getting sleep or rest or whatever it may be that would want to keep you out of being together. Amen. Coming together in our church service is essential and it's expected.

Amen. We have to be faithful to those things. And when I read the scriptures, I find that they're gathering together and unity was when the Holy Ghost was poured out. It's they're gathering together in unity when in assembling together in fellowship and for hearing the teaching of the word and in prayer and breaking of bread.

That's when the Lord worked miracles among them and added to the souls to the church daily.

Amen. And being with us whenever we meet is essential for the moving of the Holy Ghost and for church growth and for the spirit of God to be manifested among his people here in Houston.

[15:19] Amen. I pray God stirs every heart that calls this their church. Amen. To prioritize and to value the gathering together of this church body in Houston.

That's my prayer this year. And when you come and when you when we are together, it's vitally important that we participate together and serve the Lord together.

Amen. And and serve each other as well. Mark chapter 10 verse 45 says, for even the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many.

God himself put on flesh and became a man came to us, not for us to serve and to minister to him, but so that he could serve us and minister to us to the point that he would lay down his life for us.

Amen. That we would be able to experience salvation. And so Jesus himself, the greatest of all, set that best example for us by coming to serve rather than to be served.

[16:26] Amen. We have to get out of the mindset that I come to church to get something from the Lord or to get something from someone else. Amen. That's not what it's all about.

I mean, coming to the house of the Lord is less about what I can get and it should be more about what can I give. Amen. What can I give to to the work of the Lord? What can I give to another fellow member of the body of Christ?

How can I be a blessing and how can I serve? Amen. That's the mindset that we need in 2026.

Amen. John chapter 13, verse 13 through 15 says, you call me master and Lord.

And you say, well, for so I am. If then your Lord and master have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I've given you this example that you should do as I have done to you.

So at this time, I'm going to get the buckets. I'm just kidding. You should have seen the look on your face. Actually, I think everyone here would be fine and willing if that's what we were going to do.

[17:31] And a lot of New Year services, that's what they do. But we're not going to do that this year. But it's very humiliating and humbling to have to wash somebody's feet.

I understand that. And that's what Jesus was teaching to them. It's the servant mindset. It's the humbling mindset that we need to have. And that's not about us.

It's about how can I serve my brother or my sister. And we are to come together with the mindset to serve. And it's an example that Jesus taught his disciples.

And if we were to be disciples of Jesus Christ, we have to desire and commit to his teachings. And we have to get the burden to serve. Amen. Mark 10, verse 44 says, And whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all.

Jesus said, True greatness in the kingdom of God is measured by how faithfully and how humbly you serve others. 1 Peter 4 and 10, As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

[18:40] See, God gives diverse and differing gifts to everyone that has his spirit inside of them. Amen. And it's for the profit and the building up of the whole body.

And each gift is needed. Don't underestimate the Holy Ghost that's inside of you. Amen. Don't let your past life experiences or the way you look at yourself and criticize yourself.

A lot of people criticize themselves and are very down on themselves and have low self-esteem and stuff like that. But when you come to the Lord and you have the Holy Ghost in you, you have to understand that that's the spirit of God inside of you.

And he's gifted you with things. And you are of value to the kingdom of God. Amen. We need you.

Amen. We need that spirit that's inside of you that can work in a gifting that we might not have.

And if you're not willing, amen, to submit yourself to that spirit and allow the spirit of God to work through you and let that gift that God's placed in you to be ministered to us, then we're missing out. [19:46] Amen. We're all missing out on that. And we need that. Amen. And so here's the understanding that we need. As the body of Christ, we're expected. And we need to be together in unity.

And we are expected and need to be serving each other with our spiritual giftings and talents. And the result of that is if we do that, we can be overcomers of this world.

Amen. And we will win the battles we face if we have unity in a mind to work and serve. Amen. How many believe that today?

Amen. Amen. If we just come with a mindset of being together and in unity and in service of the Lord, amen, we're going to see victories.

Amen. Amen. The battles don't go away, but we're going to see more victories. We are blessed to have truth. We are blessed if we stick together and serve in the kingdom of God together.

[20:47] Together with those things, we can overcome any obstacle we face in this world and in our lives. And we can make it together. Amen. In unity. Acts chapter 14, verse 22.

Confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith. And that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

Through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And we know that there's multiple meanings to this. We understand that there's going to be a tribulation that we have to go to before we get into the physical kingdom of God.

But when we're in the spiritual kingdom of God, there's tribulations that we're going to have to go through. We're not promised a life of ease when we have truth. We're not promised that there won't be issues.

When we have the Holy Ghost, when we have each other, and when we serve, there's no promise of it being easy. In fact, it's the opposite. We're told that we're going to have to endure much tribulation.

[21:53] In 2 Timothy 3 and 12, Yea, in all that will live godly in Christ, All that will live godly in Christ, Jesus, shall suffer persecution.

Amen. If we live the way that God wants us to live, we're going to have trouble. If we live the way God wants us to live, we're going to have to face persecution.

We're going to have to face trouble and tribulation. And this is the reason people live double lives. This is the reason many do not fully commit to God.

And they try to avoid the struggles by getting whatever benefits they may be able to get by being around and close to the body of Christ.

But they don't want to suffer with the body of Christ. And so we have people that live double lives. And I just have one thing to say for that. Well, for me and my house, we're going to serve the Lord.

[22:49] I mean, my mind's made up. I don't know about you, but we're going to serve the Lord together. Amen. Amen. And in Romans chapter 5, verses 3 through 5, it says, And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.

And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. When we have the Holy Ghost, we have the love of God literally in our hearts.

The love that he shed. The blood that he shed. That was his love. It's literally within our hearts. And we can have hope no matter what trials and tribulations we go through in life.

Amen. I've discovered that when I completely sell out to God, when I fully make up my mind that I'm going to be together with the body of Christ, then I will be victorious over any tribulation or circumstance that comes along.

Amen. And life is full of them. Life is not going to be without hardship. Life is going to throw us curveballs. Amen.

[23:59] Not everything is going to go as you've planned. People are going to hurt you. People are going to say things that hurt you. People are going to do things that hurt us.

Amen. And there's temptations around every corner. It's the world we live in. We live in a fallen world. Don't forget. I mean, we do a good job of making the world comfortable, but don't forget this is a curse that we're living because of the sin from Adam and Eve.

And there's darkness all around in this world, and there's a great tribulation coming. But thanks be to God, which giveth the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, the Bible says, through him that loved us. So, for whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith, the Bible says.

It is our faith. It's our faithfulness. It's our faithfulness to the body of Christ and to the serving of the kingdom that brings the victory through God. Amen. That's scripture. And Jesus said that these things I have spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace in the world.

[25 : 13] Ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. Amen. We can have peace in him even though we're going through tribulation in the world, knowing that he conquered it all.

Amen. And that spirit inside of us today. Amen. I thank God for that. And ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them because greater is he that's in you than he that's in the world. Amen. And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony. And they love not their lives unto the death. Amen. And Paul, if you look at the apostle Paul at the end of his life before being killed for his faithfulness, said, I have fought a good fight.

I have finished my course, and I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.

And not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. And Jesus said it as well. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

[26 : 25] And so the word of God declares to us that true winning is not by our own strength, but through the work Christ did on the cross and the spirit that dwells within us.

It is that work on the cross that he did that allows us to be part of the body of Christ today. Amen. By being together and serving and being full of his spirit, we overcome sin.

We overcome the world. We overcome every enemy that comes against us, and we will receive crowns, and we will receive an inheritance, and we shall have an everlasting victory in his kingdom.

Amen. I'm going to magnify the Lord for that because he is so good. Jesus, I thank you for your promise, God. I thank you for your promises, God. I thank you for your promises, God.

2 Timothy 1, verse 7 says, For God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. And this verse says it plainly.

[27 : 27] We can read it over and over. That fear is a spirit. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear. Fear is a spirit, and that spirit of fear is not from God.

Amen. It says plainly, God gives us a sound mind. He gives us power. He gives us love. Those are the things that Scripture says that God gives us, not the spirit of fear. We are not to be controlled by the spirit of fear or anxiety.

To let fear and anxiety rule is to receive the wrong spirit, receive God's spirit of a sound mind. And the Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?

Right? Right? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? This year needs to be a year of winning. Winning against fears.

Winning against anxieties. Winning against carnality. The battles of temptation that we face.

Winning, just winning. Winning, winning, winning. Amen.

[28 : 34] We need to win this year. Winning against the things that come against us. That has no business ruling over us. Amen. We should have one Lord and Master, and that's the Christ, Lord Jesus.

Not these things of the world. Not these spirits. If you have been battling some things in the past, declare today that there is going to be some conquering of those things through the Holy Ghost this year.

Amen. Amen. We need to be together. We need to be together. Serving together. And winning together in 2026. And if we are together and serving as the body of Christ, we will be delivered from the prison of fear and anxiety and the darkness of this world.

And we are here to cast every concern we have on Him. And to walk in His peace and overcome all these things that come against us by and through the victory of Jesus.

Amen. King Jesus has already won. Amen. Jesus is King. Amen. And if you stand today, I'm closing. I just want, this year I want us to get in the habit of addressing Jesus differently.

[29:44] I believe words matter. The words that we speak represent our thinking. The Bible says, from the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

What's in our heart and our mind and the way we think comes out in our words. And so the reverse of that is if we make a conscious effort to change our words, then we should be able to change what's in our hearts.

Amen. So words that matter. And I want to get in my heart and mind and soul about this serving the kingdom business.

This year I want to learn to get in the habit of addressing Jesus as King Jesus. Amen. Can you see that? King Jesus. I usually start my prayers, Lord Jesus.

Right? And that's right and good. He is our Lord of Lords. And I want him to be Lord of my life. But he's also King Jesus. He's the King of Kings as well.

[30:51] And I'm going to get my mind on the kingdom this year. And I invite disciples of Jesus Christ in Houston to do the same thing. And it starts with understanding who the King of this kingdom is.

And that is King Jesus. Amen. Amen. Amen. It's King Jesus. But if I can get my thinking to change to being King Jesus minded, I'll be kingdom minded.

And if I'm kingdom minded, I will realize that there are expectations of being together in the kingdom. Serving in the kingdom. And then I get to enjoy the victory of the kingdom.

Amen. Starting today in this new year, my prayer is that we would walk in unity. Serve together with all our hearts. And claim the victory over things that God has already won for us.

Amen. Amen. Right now, I would like for us to find a place to pray before we leave today. And make some fresh commitments to the Lord.

[31:55] If you're going to make any kind of commitments for the new year, why not make some commitments to the Lord? Amen. With the intentions of keeping them. And my prayer and my request to you is that those commitments that you make revolve around making sure that we're more faithful to the house of God.

And together, being together. And serving however and whatever capacity that we can this year. With the expectation that if we do those things, then that we're going to see victories.

And we're going to be winning this year. Amen. I'm tired of the battles. I'm tired of having to fight battles, the same battles over and over. I don't know about you. I want some victories this year. Amen.

I want to conquer some things and leave that conquered and walk to the next thing. There's going to be another battle along the way and that's fine. But I don't want to get stuck way back here.

I want to conquer these things so I can move on to other things and conquer those things as well.

Amen. I want this to be a year of winning for the disciples of Jesus Christ.

[32:57] Amen. Amen. Let's pray together.