

The Big Idea

5-5-2024

“I believe that only one power exists on this sorry planet that can (transform the human heart). It’s the power of the love of Jesus Christ, the love that conquers sin and wipes out shame and heals wounds and reconciles enemies and patches broken dreams and ultimately changes the world, one life at a time. And what grips my heart everyday is the knowledge that the radical message of that transforming love has been given to the church.”

“That means in a very real way the future of the world rests in the hands of local congregations like yours and mine. It’s the church or it’s lights out. Without church so filled with the power of God that they can’t help but spill goodness and peace and love and joy into the world, depravity will win the day; evil will flood the world. But it does not have to be that way. Strong, growing communities of faith can turn the tide of history. They can!”

“Don’t bother looking elsewhere. The church is it.” (Bill Hybels, Courageous Leadership)

*42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. **Acts 2:42-47***

*37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38 And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. **Acts 2:37-41***

*31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. 32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. 33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. **Acts 4:31-33***

UNITY

First of all, the church is to have unity.

And all who believed were together and had all things in common. Acts 2:44

32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.

Acts 4:32

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! 2 It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! 3 It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.” Psalm 133

Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. 2 Corinthians 13:11

May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 15:5-6

From whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. Ephesians 4:16

20 “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” John 17:20-21

1) Fellowship

“And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near.” Hebrews 10:25

“With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was with them all.”

2) The Word

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.

“If most people would trade their TV time for Bible reading, they’d finish the entire Bible in four weeks or less.” – John Piper

“The best evidence of Bible’s being the word of God is to be found between its covers. It proves itself.” – Charles Hodge

“Sometimes we confuse our agenda we have for God with God Himself. The best way to not speak for Him and let Him speak to you – the scriptures.” – Tim Keller

3) Prayer

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27