

together, let's abound in God's work

LAST WEEK'S MESSAGE

How can we collectively achieve unity as a church? In His prayer, Jesus stressed on the importance of unity among believers to make the church a compelling witness to the world (John 17:20-21). While individual efforts can make a difference, the power of collective action has the potential to change the world. Together, let's abound in God's work, regardless of where we are, echoing Paul's encouragement in 1 Corinthians 15:57-58. The purpose of our work must align with God's mission on earth which is to share the gospel and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). So, how do we abound in God's work?

give abundantly (1 Corinthians 16:1-4)

1 Corinthians 15 concludes with Paul celebrating the victory through the resurrection of Jesus. In His final exhortations, he encouraged giving joyfully and conducting all actions with love. Giving is a tangible expression of love, as shown by God in giving Jesus for our salvation. The churches founded by Paul have embraced a culture of giving. Weekly contributions were directed towards God, His people, and His work. Early churches, as seen in Acts 2:44-45, shared their resources amongst one another. As the church expanded, accountability in giving became necessary.

Why do we give to the church? Firstly, to fulfill the Great Commission (Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 9:23, 2 Timothy 4:2). Secondly, to aid those in need, both within and outside the church (Acts 4:33-35, Acts 6:1, Galatians 2:10). The churches supported Jerusalem during a famine, showcasing solidarity. Thirdly, to support church workers, pastors, and missionaries (1 Timothy 5:17-18, 1 Corinthians 9:11, Acts 13:2-3). Giving is a pathway to abound in God's work — honoring God, learning stewardship, avoiding materialism, receiving blessings, and fostering faith. Tithing (10% of income for the Lord's work) and offerings (voluntary giving beyond the tithe) both serve the purpose of supporting the Lord, His people, and His work. Scripture doesn't negate tithing; Abraham and Jacob practiced it before the law. Our treasures, including money, should be invested in God's kingdom (Matthew 6:19-21). Tithing is a test of our love for God, and both consequences and blessings follow (Malachi 3:8-10). Jesus endorsed tithing, emphasizing cheerful and generous giving (Luke 11:42, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, Luke 6:38). In giving, we find that we cannot outgive God!

love abundantly (1 Corinthians 16:5-24)

Jesus commanded His disciples to love as He loved them: a love that would identify them as His followers (John 13:34-35). Paul desired the Corinthian church to exhibit this love, making it attractive to outsiders. Genuine love should be evident in our actions, words, and the time we spend with each other. Paul intentionally invested time with the Corinthians, even when previously faced with opposition. He urged the church to treat Timothy well, encouraging them to practice unity amidst potential divisions. Paul also encouraged Apollos to visit the Corinthians to demonstrate mutual support and to counter divisions.

When the world witnesses the love and support within the church, it becomes a compelling testimony (Acts 2:46-47). While other groups outside the church may offer enjoyable companionship, the church, imperfect though it may be, provides a unique environment for spiritual growth. Even in moments of disappointment, staying connected to the church is crucial. Act in love, resolve conflicts, forgive one another, practice mutual submission, honor those who refresh your spirit, and treat each other as family. Maintain an eternal perspective, eagerly awaiting the return of our Lord Jesus Christ as we actively engage in God's work through abundant giving and love!

last week's memory verse

Be on the alert, stand firm
in the faith, act like men, be
strong. Let all that you do be
done in love.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:13-14

discuss this message

What have you learned about tithes and offering from the message and why do you think it's important?

What are the reasons that prevent (or can prevent) you from exercising the spiritual discipline of giving to the Lord and His work?

Why do you think the church (the body of Christ) is the best place to grow in our relationship with God?

What can you do to fulfill God's desire of unity and growing love in the body of Christ (specifically in CCF)?

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December 3, 2023

Sunday at 1:00 PM, Room 3A

- Survey of the Bible

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December 7, 2023

Thursday at 7:30 PM

- Survey of the Bible

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LOOKING FOR ANSWERS? THINK YOUR VISIT IS A COINCIDENCE? YOUR BEING HERE TODAY IS NO ACCIDENT!

God brought you here for His purpose.

1 God loves you.

He desires for you to have a meaningful life with Him in the present and gain eternal life with Him in the future.

*Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who **keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness** to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments — Deuteronomy 7:9*

2 God is holy.

We are sinful, and our sin separates us from Him.

Everyone has sinned and is far away from God's saving presence. — Romans 3:23

3 God is merciful.

In His love, He made the only way for us to be reconciled to Him: through His son, Jesus Christ. Jesus had to die on the cross for our sins and be raised to life for eternity.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. — Romans 5:8

I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. — John 14:6

4 God is gracious.

By placing our faith in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven of our sins and saved from eternal death.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. — John 3:16

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. — Ephesians 2:8-9

5 God keeps His promises.

You can be sure that you have eternal life when you trust in Jesus.

And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life. — 1 John 5:11-13



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