

[00:00:00] Everything we do can be awesome in the spirit, but nothing we do, kind of just our effort isn't going to cut it, you know? So, God, we just want to bring ourselves again. Just as we were surrendering to you in our worship, Holy Spirit.

[00:00:18] Our voices are great, our instruments are great. You know, I've got to preach. I'm sure it's great. But without the Holy Spirit, it's just a bunch of words. And we want your power. We want. We don't want words. We want power. We want authenticity. We want reality. So we welcome you again, Holy Spirit. We say it over and over, but it's because we realize that it's not by our might or our power, but it's by you, Holy Spirit. And you're precious to us. And we know that with you in our lives, you in this room, all kinds of craziness is going to leave the door and not walk out with us.

[00:00:59] So if you came in feeling any kind of craziness in your head this morning, any kind of heaviness, any kind of sickness, any kind of distraction, why don't you just invite the Holy Spirit to take it away? That only one spirit, the Holy Spirit, would be ruling in our environment, ruling in your head, ruling in your heart, ruling in this room this morning. Just ask. He'll do it. He's got power to take away all kinds of stuff that we wrestle with, and it doesn't happen until we just go, I give it to you, Holy Spirit, in Jesus name, amen. And then I'd like you to turn in a Bible. I'm actually starting to bring a book called the Bible.

[00:01:46] So for a long while, as I'm getting older, I want to be cool. So I thought, I'll use the Bible on my phone, like lots of you are on my iPad, because that's what everybody does. And then I've slowly realized that, what the heck? It's so flippin distracting. A, because there's lots of other things I could do on my phone.

[00:02:08] Just look at me, you know I'm telling the truth. B, because if you've got notifications switched on, you get interrupted. You just, you know, God's just revealing incredible truth to you on your phone. Ping. So I want to highly recommend owning a book called the Bible and reading it in the book. Great to have it on the phone so, you know, if you're on the train or whatever, but.

[00:02:31] So, judges, chapter seven. We're going back to Gideon. We started the year talking about Gideon. We're going back to Gideon. And today I'm going to talk to you about the power of unity.

[00:02:45] I could talk to you about the power. So, judges, chapter seven.

[00:02:51] I'm also rather proud of my new iPad, which is awesome.

[00:02:56] Yes, it's got room in it. I can store stuff. Finally.

[00:03:02] And so we found whatever we're using, hopefully book, but device judges seven. And I'm going to read verse seven to 22. Just. But let me give you a bit of context first, in case you've forgotten the story of Gideon. So for seven years, the Midianites have been rampaging through Israel, stealing all their food, oppressing them, driving them crazy, and they're all hiding in caves for fear and carrying away. And then this guy called Gideon tries to get a meal by thrashing some wheat in a winepress, which is a pretty ineffective way of thrashing wheat. And as he's doing it, an angel appears to him and has this incredible encounter with God, which he sort of doubts, because God's saying, I want you to lead Israel and you're going to beat these Midianites. He's like, what, me? You got the wrong guy. You know, he goes through that whole identity crisis thing, but actually he starts to believe what God's saying. Then he goes and he has to pull down. So, like, there's idol worship, there's idolatry in his family, in his family's house. So he smashes down the Asherah poles. So he pays a personal cost, takes a personal risk to clear the way, and then he summons Israel, and the Holy Spirit comes on him. And all these

thousands and thousands of people gather to him, and he's like, cool, we can take on Midian. And he's got 30,000 people. And then God says, I want you to tell all the ones that are afraid to go home. So. So a whole bunch go home. And they said, that's still too many people. You've got 10,000 left against 140,000 midianites.

[00:04:36] You have too many. And he's like, you are kidding me. And he says, no, that's too many. That's too many. So get them all to drink by the river, and I'll tell you who to pick from, all these people. So some of them bring the water up. They're kind of staying alert as they drink the water. And some of them bury their heads in the river and drink the water. And God says, just. Just have the ones that do that. And there's only 300 of them.

[00:05:04] God says, I'll use them, and that's enough. And that's where we pick up the story. So there's 100, 3140 thousand midianites just down the road. That have been rampaging, pillaging, winning over and over again. And there's these Gideon and these 300 blokes.

[00:05:26] And we get into the story right there. Okay, so verse seven. I said, didn't I?

[00:05:33] Judges? Seven. Seven.

[00:05:36] I'm gonna go. The Lord said to Gideon, verse seven, with the 300 men that lapped, I will save you and give Midianites into your hand. Wow.

[00:05:46] Let all the other men go, each of his, to his own place. So Gideon sent the rest of the Israelites to their tents. But kept the 300 who took over the provisions and trumpets of the others. A very handy trumpet against hundreds of thousands of people. Now, the lamp, the camp of Midian lay below him in the valley. During the night, the Lord said, get up, Gideon. Go down against the camp, because I'm going to give it into your hands. Can you imagine how impossible this is in Gideon's brain at this point in time? How outrageously. Because we've read the book and we know the story. Sometimes it's good to stop and bury yourself in the moment and think, Gideon, man, this is bonkers.

[00:06:33] But he says, I'm going to give them into your hands. If you're afraid to attack, who wouldn't be? Go down the camp with your servant and listen to what they're saying. Afterwards, you'll be encouraged, and you will attack the camp. So he goes with Puri's servant, went down to the outposts of the camp. The Midianites and the Amalekites and all the other eastern people. Had settled in the valley. Thick as locusts. The camels could no more be counted. Than the sand on the seashore. That's just the camels.

[00:07:01] Gideon arrived just as man was telling his friend a dream. I had a dream. He said. A round loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the midnight camp. It struck the tent with such force that the tent overturned and collapsed. His friend responded, this can be nothing other than the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, the Israelites. God has given the Midianites and the whole camp into his hands.

[00:07:28] Isn't that cool? He starts giving all the soldiers scary dreams. The night before the attack, when Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he worshipped God. Yeah. Wouldn't you? And he returned to the camp of Israel and called out, get up. The Lord's given the midianite camp into our hands.

[00:07:48] Dividing the 300 men into three companies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all the men with torches inside.

[00:07:58] Hmm.

[00:08:00] He didn't arm them with tactical nuclear missiles or extra swords or some other. He just said, get a lamp and get a trumpet.

[00:08:10] But, you know, the 300 of the left just must be game for anything.

[00:08:17] So he said, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all the men with torches inside. He says, watch me. He told them, follow my lead. When I get to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do when I and all the people with me blow our trumpets. And from around the camp, blow yours and shout, for the Lord. And for Gideon. And Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp. And beginning in the middle, watch. Just after they had changed the guard, they blew their trumpets and broke their jars that were in their hands. The three companies blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their hands and holding their right hands, the trumpets that they were now blowing, they shouted, a sword for the Lord and for Gideon. While each man held his position around the camp, all the midianites ran crying out as they fled. So cool.

[00:09:12] What a bonkers strategy.

[00:09:16] What an absolutely outrageous victory.

[00:09:22] Who would have come up with that?

[00:09:26] God, if you were there, would you have done it?

[00:09:36] Maybe. Maybe not. You know, the question I ask myself constantly, why did this work? And I think is because it's a great illustration of the power of unity, that how can a group of insignificant size and using unconventional means changed the world around them? Well, here you have a powerful example of exactly that. These guys were unified and 20 years involved in churches. This one and others in Scotland. I would say one of the major strongholds in this nation that thwarts the great progress of the church is disunity. Is disunity. Not just disunity between churches, but disunity inside. Churches have been involved in so many churches where actually the issue that's hindering them is something that's schismatic or tense or ununited inside the community. It's not just that they don't get on with church x down the road. So I'm speaking about a spiritual stronghold in our nation that I believe one of the things we're called to do is not be like it. One of the things I'm enjoying about where we are is this sense of growing precious unity amongst us. And I think it's important we recognize it and we know how to steward it, how to protect it, how to develop it, because God loves it. He absolutely loves it. And one of the reasons that the church has not made progress in Scotland is the enemy knows his basic strategy is if he can divide, he can conquer, because he has no real authority or real power. So if he can sow dissension and disunity, he can win by getting in amongst the saints and making them fight one another rather than fight him. Because he knows if we fight him, he's going to lose, because there's already been a death and a resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

[00:11:39] So just before we jump on, I want to do an expression of heart unity in the body of Christ, because our friends down the road, Jamie and Linda, who are part of kingdom legacy and have lead Vineyard church. You know about Vineyard, Glasgow Vineyard, just literally over the hill there. Well, I talked to them and they're fine with us sharing this. They have now left the vineyard movement.

[00:12:05] Very brave thing to do for all sorts of reasons. They're no longer. So you can't call them Glasgow Vineyard anymore because it's a copyrighted name. They are now dwelling

place, Glasgow.

[00:12:18] Courageous folks. They've been and gone and done it. The whole church knows. I'm not speaking out of turn, but we just checked it through with them and they're not going to be on their own, because they're going to. They're buying into their friendship with us in Kingdom legacy, the group of leaders and churches around the UK and as well as the Cromer church, which some of us have visited with Steve and Juliet Barber. So they've got friendships, they've got connection, but they're no longer. You can't talk about Glasgow Vineyard, it's not there anymore. So I'd like us just to. Quickly, would you join me? Just praying for them. They're going to have a bit of a launch next week and it's all the people are excited. I think the church is excited. I think there's some other stuff going on that isn't so exciting. So, Father, thanks for our friends, thanks for their courage, thanks for what you're doing with them right now, and thanks for what they stand for. And we just want to stand in unity of heart and mind and pray massive, massive progress on them and also great protection as they take this radical journey. In Jesus name, amen. All right, so here we have a group of insignificant size and unconventional means changing the world around them. How did they do it? They did it because unity is more powerful than numbers.

[00:13:37] You can have a massive group of people, but if they're disunited, they will not have an impact. You can have a big church, but if it's disunited, it will not have an impact. Unity is more powerful than numbers. That's a big lesson of this passage, is their 300 was way more powerful than the 130,000.

[00:13:58] Togetherness was the key. The fearful had gone that, you know, whatever. The ones who drank funny were the ones that stayed for some reason. But that is a powerful, powerful thing. The ability of a church to affect a region is dependent on its unity, not on its size. Size can come later.

[00:14:19] Why?

[00:14:21] Because unity attracts God. Activity.

[00:14:26] All right. Unity, togetherness of heart. Togetherness of heart and mind attracts the activity of the Holy Spirit. I'll read you out of psalm 133. A famous psalm says, behold how good and how pleasant it is when brethren dwell together in unity. Lots of you will know this psalm. Yeah. How good and how pleasant is when brethren dwell in unity. It's like the precious ointment upon their head that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard. So it's talking about the Old Testament priest being anointed, and it went down, all the way down his head, down his beard, right to the skirts of his garments as the dew of Hermon and as the dew that descends on the mountain of Zion. Now, what I want to point out is all that is about how good unity is. Even before God gets involved and in a hot, harried environment, the dew of Hermann is refreshing. It helps the crops grow.

[00:15:25] The anointing oil is cool and refreshing. There's something in an atmosphere of unity that is just a joy to be in, whether the God's there or not, the actual unity of people. And actually, God says, if you go back to the Tower of Babel story where they're all united, he's not involved. He says, man, if we let this go on like this, all speak in the same language, all have the same purpose, nothing will be impossible for them.

[00:15:53] That's without him.

[00:15:56] So the first bit of this psalm is telling us how yummy it is to be together in unity. And it just feels refreshing and good and does your heart good.

[00:16:08] It feels great, doesn't it?

[00:16:11] And then it says, for there the Lord commands a blessing, even life, forevermore. So he commands blessing on togetherness.

[00:16:19] I think it works both ways. I think the Holy Spirit comes. He pulls us together. That's true of every revival. The Holy Spirit moves. He pulls people together, and it's true of every revival ever studied. The reason they fail is because the people then pull apart again. The unity the spirit gave them. They lose. Some kind of relational thing happens in the revival, and it means it only lasts for a year, two years, three years, I've studied loads of them and I would say that was a key feature of them all. So the move of God galvanizes people and they're all excited, and then at some point, some people find a reason to fall out with other people and the whole thing starts to dissipate.

[00:17:01] But God commands blessing on unity. That's why it's so powerful. It literally attracts him. We're all together, we're having a good time, enjoy one another. We love one another, we're together. And he loves to be.

[00:17:14] Bless it and make it much more than it is on its own.

[00:17:20] Much more than it is on its own. New Testament example, acts 432. Don't turn there. There's not time. It says, all the believers were one heart and mind. By this time, there's quite a lot of believers. No, but they were of one heart and mind. That's a statement of unity. They allowed themselves to be of the same mind and same purpose. They allowed themselves to be joined to something bigger than just their own plan.

[00:17:48] And no one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. So the fruit of the unity was sharing, and the other fruit of the unity is the great power. The apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's grace was powerfully on them, so that there was no needy person amongst them. So this togetherness that was given by the spirit as they maintained it, attracted more of the spirit, so that there was signs and wonders done through the apostles and there was no need in the whole community. What a statement. Such was the financial provision that flowed in this unified heart situation.

[00:18:30] The Bible can tell us the truth, that there was no needy person amongst them, but the key to it was they were one heart and mind. Isn't that amazing? Great grace was on them. That's undeserved favour. It's God's favor. It's things happening that you can't make happen you don't deserve that they should happen and they happen. Why? Because there's heart and mind togetherness.

[00:18:54] It's an atmosphere. It's literally an atmosphere. Forgot time. I'll say more about this. That sense of how yummy it feels is an atmosphere. And it's an atmosphere you can detect when it's present, and certainly sensitive people can detect when it isn't. People walk into a room like, oh, this feels all over the place, and they kind of can feel it in their heart. And then you walk into a room where there's a group of people and they're together. You're like, hmm, this feels yummy.

[00:19:22] It's like, you know, all those words about ointment and things. It just feels yummy.

[00:19:30] So that's my first point, is unity is more powerful than numbers because God loves it and he blesses it, and it makes. Doesn't matter how many. If you think of the early church, they

started twelve apostles, and then there was 120, but they were all together in one place. It says, holy spirit falls on that togetherness. And here we are a couple of thousand years later. Christianity is growing twice as fast around the world than the birth rate.

[00:20:04] It's twice as fast around the world than the birth rate. It's absolutely amazing what 2000 years of Christianity has done. There's not time to go into that, but there's literally, literally millions and millions. Over a billion believers. The planet isn't that awesome?

[00:20:22] But that was from 120. And actually, within Paul's lifetime, most of the known world, the roman world, was evangelized in less than 300 years. It's amazing. It's absolutely extraordinary what can happen by the power of the spirit on a unified people that protect and steward that. Well, unity is more powerful than numbers. That was my first point. What is unity? What are the elements of unity do we see here in Gideon's army? I'd like to suggest to you that there are four elements to Gideon's army's unity that we could learn from and helps us see what it looks like, because it's kind of a concept, isn't it? Unity? Yeah. I want to be united. What does that actually look like? It does tell us. It says, they shouted.

[00:21:17] Shouting isn't the point here. But it says, shouted, a sword for the Lord. And Gideon, they smashed their lamps, they blew their trumpets, and they routed and pursued the enemy. So I want to break that down. I think there's four elements to what unity is. If we have that and we want to preserve and grow that, here's four things to learn. Okay. Ready?

[00:21:40] Number one, your sword is for the Lord.

[00:21:46] So you are a warrior, you are in the fight. And your first place is surrender to Jesus. I am in this for him, okay? I am in this for him. My life is directly and supremely surrendered to the Lord Jesus.

[00:22:02] Amen. That's an easy one, isn't it?

[00:22:05] Yeah. Just say yes.

[00:22:07] We all love Jesus. Anybody love Jesus? Yeah. My swords for him. Yeah. I want to fight with Jesus.

[00:22:16] I do not want to fight Jesus, okay? I want to fight with him. For him. I'm on his. I'm on Jesus team. So they're shouting, a sword for the Lord.

[00:22:27] Oh, nice. I like the sword for the Lord. But the next thing is they also. They've given their sword to Gideon. That's the actual person that they know who's got. Who's a bit strange, who thrashes wheat in a winepress, who takes risks, who tells all the army to go away.

[00:22:51] I mean, just. I mean, just put yourself in there. He's told everybody that's useful, that, you know, to clear off, because either they're afraid or they don't drink water the right way.

[00:23:03] If you're in the army and you're watching all this happening and it's whittling down and whittling down, and then it's you, you. This guy's nuts.

[00:23:10] God speaks to him and he tells people to clear off. And some of it's based on nothing other than how they drink.

[00:23:20] There's a dedication to the Lord, but there's also a following of leadership. They rallied to Gideon's anointing.

[00:23:28] In modern language, New Testament, we'd say they rallied to the apostolic leader, who had a crazy plan.

[00:23:39] They saw Gideon's leadership and they honoured it and they rallied to it. And this wasn't just as a passive acceptance, but they allowed him to influence them to the degree that they did. Crazy stuff.

[00:23:58] Gideon, the thing we get wrong often about leadership is we think we assume wrongly, and this is because it's in our culture.

[00:24:08] The wrong stuff is in our culture, is that it's self serving.

[00:24:13] But actually, Gideon and all the leaders in the Bible, Old and New Testament, are given a vision to lead people. And the vision is to lead people to a place that's better for them at high cost. The guy who's doing the leading, do you understand what I'm saying here? So that Gideon's commission wasn't.

[00:24:42] God says to him, I'm going to make you some great leader. You're going to get lots of money, you know, you're going to drive a Rolls Royce, you're going to look really cool. That's the job of being a leader. No, his job was, I'm calling you to deliver this people from that seven years of oppression, from those horrible midianites, and you're going to have to take the risk to smash down the family altar, tell everybody to go away, blow a trumpet and hope for the bloomin best.

[00:25:14] But his vision was for the benefit of the people that were going to follow. In fact, his vision was for the benefit of a lot of people who never showed up or weren't there.

[00:25:23] And if you look at Moses, it was exactly the same he was called. He paid a huge price to lead over a million people out of Egypt, out of slavery and a bondage, to get them where not into a desert, but into a promised land.

[00:25:39] And fundamentally, that's what leadership is doing. It wants to take you into the promised land. It wants to take you into the land of God's promises, where they get fulfilled in your life and out of bondage, out of slavery, out of fear, out of oppression, out of nastiness.

[00:25:57] It's a kingdom of God calling and on some people who are just stupid enough to be brave enough to stand up and go, I'm going to do this because the status quo needs to change.

[00:26:12] Do you see? We can't keep hiding as a church.

[00:26:16] We can't keep being small, we can't keep being powerless. We can't keep being oppressed, we can't keep being disunited. We can't be. That takes some people to go. We can't keep being this. We've got to be this.

[00:26:30] Do you get it?

[00:26:32] So he brought freedom to the whole nation after seven years of hiding because God gave him a vision for the benefit of others, and he was courageous enough to go for it.

[00:26:43] That's what New Testament leadership is, basically. It isn't having all the cars or being prominent. It's about getting the job done and helping as many people as possible get into their promises and the promised land of freedom. So their sword was for the Lord and it was for Gideon, a real person, that was leading them. They had a clear following of clear leadership.

Number three. So this is my four elements of unity, so dedication to Jesus, following of leaders number three. They had a shared strategy. You know, smashing lanterns and blowing trumpets, as we've already said, seems a bit crazy, but at least they all did the same thing at the same time.

[00:27:35] There wasn't a little group of them that go, you know, this is a stupid strategy. Let's get our swords, let's go stick it up a few midianites. Because how is blowing a trumpet going to kill any of the enemy? And you could have seen a group of 20 there, a group of ten there, all hiving off down in the valley, going in, sticking it. No, they all went, okay, this is the deal. We're going to do it together.

[00:27:57] And that was powerful because they did it together.

[00:28:03] They listened to the plan, and although it was a crazy plan, they stuck with the plan, man. I see, leading churches is like herding cats sometimes.

[00:28:19] Meow. Yeah, yeah.

[00:28:21] So they all smashed the lanterns, they shared strategy. It's interesting, we were having a big chat a couple of months ago with the elders and the vision management team. Just reviewing some of the things that have come up post Covid in church life. There's an emergence of more sort of small group type churches or micro churches, and doing it this way, you know, congregation on a Sunday with small groups, which is kind of the. For a long time and different things. And you know what I started to realize, because whichever bit you researched, you could find a successful version of it.

[00:29:01] So we found successful micro churches.

[00:29:05] I know of a church, I found a church that's 1200 people and has no small groups.

[00:29:13] And he's seeing hundreds of people saved every, every week.

[00:29:18] So I'm like, hang on a minute.

[00:29:22] What happens when you go through a tough time like Covid is you start to question the methodology and think a new method will fix whatever was broken. Now, there's always new things to learn, don't get me wrong. And there's things you can learn from micro churches, things you can learn from people who have no small groups.

[00:29:43] Yeah, but the methodology isn't the issue.

[00:29:48] What I realized is all the ones that were working had great unity.

[00:29:53] They were all committed to the method. The group of people that were pursuing it.

[00:29:59] Do you see what I'm saying? It wasn't that the method was superior, it was. There was enough people who were willing to give it a bash and were united about doing it. Then that made it effective.

[00:30:11] Hello.

[00:30:13] Good morning.

[00:30:16] So you have to not just. So the fourth point is there's unity about defeating midian. So actually our vision statement, our mission statement about carrying the presence of God to transform Scotland and beyond. It's pretty difficult to disagree with that, isn't it? It's hard to not like that, but it's important that you buy into that as a vision.

[00:30:40] But alongside that, you need unity about how, not just what, which is the strategy, and you need unity around Jesus, and you need unity about your leadership. Otherwise you don't have the cohesion. You need to get the blessing. You need to do it because God blesses the unity, not so much the method as part of a bunch of people that loved what was happening in the nineties with cell church, incredible, huge churches growing all around the far east. And so a lot of churches adopted cell church. The method didn't work in the UK.

[00:31:25] Methods are not the thing that God's anoints. God anoints unity. He's attracted to humans who get their act together, go after a purpose that he's called them to. All right, so not just some sort of vague, random unity, but something that's built around the purpose of God to see the earth change.

[00:31:46] Amen. So four things. How you doing?

[00:31:50] They routed the enemy and pursued them because they were united. They were united around Jesus, they were united around their leadership, and they were willing to say so sword for the Lord of Virginia.

[00:32:05] They were united around their strategy. They all bought into it, got on with it, and they were united around their purpose.

[00:32:13] And how am I doing for time? Yes, I can. Purpose is crucial.

[00:32:20] Purpose is absolutely crucial to your life and your mental health today.

[00:32:30] This is the verse out of lamentations, and I haven't got time to unpack the context, but lamentations is a sad book because of all the deterioration that has happened to Jerusalem and the exile. And there's verse nine of lamentations. One says this she did not consider, and this is in the new King James. She did not consider her destiny, therefore her collapse was awesome.

[00:32:57] She did not consider her destiny, therefore her collapse was awesome.

[00:33:04] Forgetting your purpose leads to some measure of spiritual collapse internally. It may not look like it on the outside. In fact, clinical psychologists are now in complete agreement. A focus, if you are purely focused on yourself, that is the same as being depressed. The measurements look the same.

[00:33:28] What makes us come alive and be psychologically and mentally healthy is having a purpose outside of ourselves to pursue with a community of people.

[00:33:43] And when you forget your destiny, no matter how challenging it might be, it's a step towards internally collapsing.

[00:33:52] And the point of the destiny? The point of the destiny is something that's shaped by the things that God has said to you, not things that we necessarily have dreamed up. So it's not focused on, I want a comfortable life. It's not focused on the holy Trinity, the unholy trinity of me, myself and I. It's focused on him and his purpose.

[00:34:13] And as we. What psychology is telling us, as we do something like that, we get healthier.

[00:34:20] What the Bible is telling us is we get healthier when we remember our destiny.

[00:34:26] These guys remembered their destiny was not to be overrun by a bunch of midianites, but to be a glorious demonstration of God's kingdom on the earth. And they were willing to take a massive risk for it. And it was incredible, was the outcome. It's not how can I look after me? It's how can I look after him? And then he'll look after me.

[00:34:50] Another way that the Bible puts it is seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. The more we seek all these things, the less we tend to seek first the kingdom, and the less we are alive on the inside, spiritually.

[00:35:08] God has given you promises. God has given us promises. God has given you a purpose and a destiny that's bigger. His purpose for you will always be more than you can pull off on your own resources, with your own qualifications, with working out the politics of your workplace, et cetera, et cetera. God's plan for you is always bigger than what you can pull off on your own, because then he gets the glory, which was the point of the Gideon story.

[00:35:38] All right, so forgetting your purpose leads to spiritual collapse. So buying into a clear vision of a community is healthy for you spiritually and psychologically. Right? Going to give you five keys for building, sustaining unity in an apostolic house. You ready? And we can send these out. So.

[00:36:05] And I'll land on time. How about that?

[00:36:10] Five keys, sustaining unity. And remember, this may even kind of start to clash inside you. This is a stronghold in our nation to keep us divided. So there may be emotions that this raises, like, oh, I'm not sure I like this. Bring it to the Lord. Please bring it to the Lord. Because he wants, and he is uniting us and he wants to build a unity in churches and across churches.

[00:36:35] Number one, five keys. So, some takeaways that we can do. Connect to apostolic leadership that inspires faith for a supernatural lifestyle.

[00:36:46] And connect means you specifically identify and receive from that ministry. It's just like, yeah, Gideon.

[00:36:54] Number two, absorb as much apostolic input as you can. Learn from them how to see God, yourself and the world around you differently to how you functioned before.

[00:37:07] Allow this anointing to tear the top off your box. And so you begin to believe God for more than you ever thought possible.

[00:37:17] How are we doing? I'll send them out. Because you can't. Not time for you to write these down. Number three, seek to value and understand the role, impact and impartation of all of the five fold gifts. So this is where disunity come in, because God has put different kinds of gifts in the body. Apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, evangelist. Okay, so to have unity, we need to value all of them. Seek to value all of them and let them impact your life. Refuse to choose a side or limit your honor to the gift. You either like the best or looks most and reminds you of you.

[00:37:55] Oh, I just honor all the evangelists because I'm such an evangelist? No. You have to be healthy. We have to honor all the gifts because we need them and we need them all right.

Determine you will find a positive and life giving place for each anointing to affect your life.

[00:38:14] Number four, resist the temptation to turn the person in your church who's maybe a pastor, teacher. Resist the temptation to turn them into apostle or prophet and also resist temptation. If you have an apostle prophet in your church leadership, resist the temptation to try and force them to become pastors and teachers.

[00:38:36] I've seen both of these happen.

[00:38:40] Allow the leaders you have to function in their anointing and honour the leader in their role.

[00:38:47] Hello, last one. Give thanks for the leadership you have. Sword for the Lord.

[00:38:55] Give thanks to the leadership you have and pray supportively for them where there are gifting gaps which there will be.

[00:39:03] Pray that they will be filled with anointed people who add strength to the culture.

[00:39:13] Hallelujah. I'm just rejoicing because I got it done in the time. It still do.

[00:39:20] Isn't that cool? I think those are really helpful pointers. I'll ask Jess if we can find a way just to get it on the Facebook group or send them out to you so that that's five keys. Connect to apostolic leadership that inspires faith, the supernatural lifestyle. Absorb as much apostolic input as you can. Seek to value and understand the whole fivefold and don't take a side.

[00:39:45] Resist the temptation to turn whoever your leaders are into a different gift than what they are. And give thanks to the ones you have and pray for the bits we don't have. We need. We need more of all sorts.

[00:39:58] Okay, would you kindly stand with me to pray?

[00:40:22] I'm just going to lead us in a prayer and it's a bit like Gideon's trumpet.

[00:40:28] You don't have to blow this if you don't want to, but I highly recommend it.

[00:40:35] So, heavenly father, we just come to you with our hearts right now. You know where our hearts are at. You, you know what's going on on the inside, you know the buttons that have got pressed, you know, the, the good things that are happening and maybe sometimes the not so good things.

[00:40:52] And we just want to pray this from a pure heart and a clear place. So if you want to just pray this after me. Holy spirit, will you cleanse me from any divisive spirit, any work of the enemy that seeks to keep me divided from my brothers, sisters and leaders?

[00:41:25] Holy spirit, will you cleanse me from any divisive thought that seeks to keep me separate from my brothers, sisters and leadership.

[00:41:43] We give ourselves to you lord.

[00:41:47] We give ourselves to honor the leaders you give us and we give ourselves to the crazy plan.

[00:42:00] Release us from any half heartedness let our atmosphere be sweet and attract your blessing because we found how good it is to dwell in unity.

[00:42:21] Amen.

[00:42:23] Amen.

[00:42:26] Just take a moment.

[00:42:29] Some divisive thoughts, feelings, difficulties connecting just walking out the room when you're still in the room. In Jesus name. The ability to connect, to honour and therefore be honoured that it's two way happening in hearts right now. In Jesus name thank you for the power of togetherness, Lord. Thank you for how great it is to be loved by other people in the church and love them back.

[00:42:59] Thank you for the crazy things you give us and then suddenly they happen.

[00:43:03] Thank you for amazing provision in this church. Just a sign of the unity that we have. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you in Jesus name, amen. Amen.