

## The Power of Togetherness

In **Matthew 18:20** Jesus declared this, *“Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”* The NIV says, *“Where two or three come together in My name, there I am in the midst of them.”* The Greek word translated “come together” is ‘*sumphoneo*’ - it’s made up of two words ‘*sum*’ (together) and ‘*phoneo*’ (to sound). Therefore, the literal translation is *“to sound together”* - to be in harmony, as in a musical agreement of sounds.

Jesus promises to be present (*“in the midst of them”*), every time two or three believers come together in His name. But there is a proviso, and that is, the people gathered must be in harmony, oneness, unity, agreement or ‘in one accord’. Therefore, our *“gathering together”* should be a pleasing chorus of heavenly sound resonating from the love for God (and each other) that exists in each of us. Quite simply, our hearts and minds must be perfectly “in tune” with each other for Jesus to be **present** among us. And the glue that binds us together is love!

In **Philippians 2:2** the apostle Paul states, *“Fulfil my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind.”* The original Greek says, *“Fulfil my joy that you may be of the same mind, having the same love, joined in soul, minding one thing.”* Does this mean that we are all expected to think and act the same? Definitely not, for there is nowhere in God’s word that suggest this. Uniformity and **unity** are not the same thing. It is possible to attain unity without uniformity. We are not expected to think, act and dress the same. Every individual has the right to choose, and these choices can lead them to unity or discord. It’s up to each individual to exercise his or her will to precipitate agreement.

There are four things mentioned in **Philippians 2:2**.

[1] To be **like-minded** is simply to have the mind of Christ - to see things as He sees them and to respond as He would respond.

[2] To have the **same love** means to show the same love to others as Jesus has shown to you - a love that doesn’t count the cost.

[3] To be of **one accord** means to work and live together in perfect harmony toward a common goal. Do we have any common goals, or have we become selfish and individualistic in our planning? Being “joined in soul” means we have common goals with those around us.

[4] To be of **one mind** means to be in such shared agreement as to constantly demonstrate that God’s word is directing all our activities. It should be obvious to others that we are following after God’s plans and purposes for our lives. And even though each of us may have received specific instructions from God, **unity** is present because we share the same cause. Jesus Himself said in **John 18:37**, *“For this cause I was born, for this cause I have come into the world.”*

Are you committed to the Cause of Jesus Christ? Your Cause is what you should be living for, and it will affect your behavior, your thinking and your motivation. It isn’t necessary to wake up every morning

wondering what you are doing with your life! Deep down you already know that you were born for His Cause. It's His Cause that brings about **harmony** and fellowship of like-minds and like-hearts.

I believe that the presence of our Lord is increasing dramatically. People will encounter Him (through His presence among us), in ever-increasing measure!

Because of His presence, the church will be in unity, in harmony and in "one accord" as never before. This great orchestra of believers (the Lord's Body) will be joined together by His Cause. The church will at last begin to make beautiful heavenly sounds and perform exquisite symphonies - to God's glory. The Great Conductor (Jesus Christ) has already taken up position at the front of His orchestra, ready to inspire and direct every instrument. Jesus is preparing to unleash more of Himself and make His glorious presence felt all the more. Are you ready for Him? Are you ready to usher in His glory through unity and harmony and "in one accord"?

Remember, to gather together "in His name" means by His *authority*, and in acknowledgement of all that He is (in obedience to His word). No one group of believers can lay claim to being the only ones who meet in His name. If that were so, His glorious presence would be limited to a small segment of His Body here on earth. As with an orchestra, each and every musician or group of instruments, can only perform correctly when they are in complete **unity** and **harmony** with the other segments or instruments of the orchestra. What's more, the notes that have already been written by the Great Composer Himself determine when and what each instrument must play. This I liken to the Word of God (the divine notes already written), and to the pre-destination and destiny that every believer has in the body of Christ. All of us have a definite and specific "part" to play!

Whenever two or three are gathered together in the Lord's name, in a musical agreement of heavenly sounds, He is there in the midst of them - like a conductor is to an orchestra. He will direct and steer. He will encourage and inspire. Only He is able to write every note, in every tune, for every instrument. He is the Great "I Am."

Yet, who is it that brings about our "gathering together" in complete unity? **Romans 8:14** tells us... *"Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."* It is the Holy Spirit who brings us together and joins our hearts and minds in **love**. He is the unifying Spirit of God – the Spirit of "*kinonia*." There is power in **unity** - "resurrection" power!

There is nothing the devil fears more than Christians who are united. This means that his number one tactic is to bring disunity in the Church. If he can succeed, then the Church is crippled (is void of power). Jesus spoke about the **power** of agreement in **Matthew 18:19** *"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven."* Don't put any limitation on this scripture. Jesus says what He means! We can receive anything if we agree about it in prayer. Therefore, we all need to have 'simple faith' that anything is possible when we come into agreement.

Back to my analogy using an orchestra... If you have ever been to a symphony, then you can appreciate the

importance of agreement. At the beginning of the performance, the orchestra warms up. This is when everyone plays on their own without considering others. The noise is atrocious. However, when the conductor lifts the baton, the racket stops and all eyes are on him. Then with a gentle wave of the baton the orchestra begins to play some incredible melody. Heavenly sounds are produced because there is harmony and synchronisation.

What makes the difference? The orchestra is in "one accord". No one is doing their own thing! And when they all do their part the music is pleasing to the ear. On their own, the music doesn't amount to much, but together they sound breathtaking.

We, too, need to harmonise together and synchronise our plans and purposes. Jesus said that when we do, *"the world would come to believe in Him"* (John 17:21). Furthermore, God's word says that one can put a thousand to flight, but two could put ten thousand to flight. Notice, **together** we can accomplish far more than if we work alone.

There is a law called synergism. This law states that when the joint-action of agents are brought together they increase each other's **effectiveness**. Not only do we have the ability to usher in the power and presence of God (in Christ Jesus), but we can increase each other's effectiveness. This appeals to me because I'm a team player! If every member of Cornerstone can significantly increase one another's effectiveness, we can really make a difference in today's society. In fact, we could probably change society! Remember the multiplication... *"One can put a thousand to flight, but two can put ten thousand to flight."*

The world has used the law of **unity** more than we believers. This is sad. We find a story in the Bible that illustrates this fact. The people in Babylonia began to work together, and they accomplished an enormous feat - the building of the tower of Babel. Although their hearts were wrong, they were at least unified. And what did God say concerning the power of their unity? He said, *"Nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them!"* God knows the power of unity. Unity will work for sinners like it will work for saints. This is exactly why the sinners have made such advances, while the church is just trying to catch up. It's time we started to strive for **unity** in the body of Christ. For when we do, watch out! We will become the mightiest force on this planet. Why? Because the **Spirit of unity** will be able to have His way with us, and resurrection power must follow!

Look at what unity produced in the book of Acts....

"Omothimadon" - **"of one accord"** (from the ancient Greek words *omos*, "the same" and *thimos*, "mind"), occurs eleven times, and ten of these are in the book of Acts, 1:14; 2:46; 4:24; 5:12; 7:57; 8:6; 12:20; 15:25; 18:12; 19:29. The other time is in Romans 15:6, where its translated "with one mind." The root of the Greek word *"thimadon"* is 'passion'. Therefore, being of the same mind, **"with one accord"**, is intrinsically not passive. **Passion** is very dynamic and **active** - in both its expression and application.

One thing you will notice, as we go through these scriptures, is that the Holy Spirit manifests **power** when the people are in one accord. But, that the devil can also manifest power when his people are in one accord.