

The Power of Praying Together

Exodus 17:8-16 | Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 | Matthew 18:18-20

Intro

"No man is an island and no man stands alone." The "one another" passages are numerous.

We are all part of what the Bible calls "the body of Christ" and we are "members each in particular." The church is a body made up of many parts. The body parts are intimately related one to another. We are to be attached, not detached, parts of the whole. The strength of the body lies not in its individual parts but in its work together.

Can you juggle with one hand? Can you clap with one hand? Can you run with only one foot? Can you see depth with one eye alone? Can you move a piano by yourself? So the church is not singular. It is to be often together, and often together in corporate, united, fervent prayer.

Proverbs 30:24-29

24 There be four *things which are* little upon the earth, but they *are* exceeding wise: 25 The ants *are* a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer; 26 The conies *are but* a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks; 27 The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands; 28 The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

I. Praying As One Symphony – “*As a Symphony in harmony*”

This passage has to do with a group of prayer partners discussing a matter, discerning the mind of God on the issue, then together praying the same insistent prayer. Not the same words, (that would be monotone) but the same ideas pushing together for the same result.

(Matthew 18:18-20)

- 18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.
- 19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.
- 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

"TO AGREE TOGETHER"

4856 sumphoneo (soon-fo-neh'-o) - verb | 4859 sumphonos (soon-fo-nos) - noun
from 4859; v AV-agree 3, agree with 2, agree together 1; 6

1) to agree together 2) to agree with one in making a bargain, to make an agreement, to bargain

One voice, harmonious, accordant, agreeing, thing agreed upon

- Isaiah 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.
- Exodus 24:33 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.
- Acts 19:34 all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

II. Praying As One Mind “*One Accord*”

This passage is about the church at large or the whole body gathered together in “hot pursuit of the same goals.”

"TO BE IN ONE ACCORD"

3661 homo-thumadon (hom-oth-oo-mad-on) - adverb

from a compound of the base of 3674 = together and 2372= hot pursuit

AV-with one accord 11, with one mind 1; 12 1) with one mind, with one accord, with one passion

Praying with one mind, with one accord, with one passion, one united front.

homo - together or in unison thumos - wrath, passion, glow, fierceness

A unique Greek word, used 10 of its 12 New Testament occurrences in the Book of Acts, helps us understand the uniqueness of the Christian community. Homo-thumadon is a compound of two words meaning to "rush along" and "in unison". The image is almost musical; a number of notes are sounded which, while different, harmonise in pitch and tone. As the instruments of a great concert under the direction of a concert master, so the Holy Spirit blends together the lives of members of Christ's church. In fact the church is only the church when it is together. The Greek word for church is *ecclesia* or assembly. “I” cannot be the church. “We” are the church.

- Acts 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.
- Acts 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.
- Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
- Acts 2:46 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,
- Acts 4:24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou *art* God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:
- Philippians 2:2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.

- Acts 12:5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing (*stretched out*) of the church unto God for him.

III. Praying For One Another

Who is your prayer partner? Who assists you in assaulting the throne of heaven? Who watches you back? Who lifts you up before God when you are sleeping, helpless, or distracted? This is “tag team” praying. Who prays for you regularly? Who knows you well enough to prevail and travail over you? Who knows your weaknesses so that they can mount a defense against the enemy?

James 5:16 Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Praying for one another requires spending abundant time together so as to know each other. A marine will lay down his life for a fellow marine. A marine would never think of leaving another downed alone on the field of battle. Togetherness and mutual commitment is their strength.

Conversational Prayers in Teams

Conversational Prayer is the method we use for our small group prayer teams. This keeps everyone involved with no prayer showmanship. Please be sensitive to others in the prayer group who may not be as experienced a prayer warrior as you. Follow these guidelines:

- Ask the Lord for discernment on how to pray, and for what to pray.
 - Prepare your heart for intercession using each of the 6 steps.
 - Assign someone to lead in each step, others may join in on it.
 - Spend about 3 minutes on each step, more if necessary.
1. Use short sentence prayers (about 60 seconds will suffice)
 2. Pray over one category at a time...keep focused on one thing.
 3. Pray over those requests for which the Lord burdens you.
 4. Pray together over an item until you feel a release in you spirit.
 5. Agree together in prayer saying "Amen" "Yes, Lord", "Make it so"
 6. Vary your positions...stand, sit, kneel, lay, walk, crouch, bow, lift hands.

Praying In Accord (Unison)

We are creatures of our culture and traditions. It is difficult for us to break out of the molds we have been formed in. Prayer traditions are hard to break since we have always equated godliness with the saints that we so often heard to pray in specific fashions. Our American-European traditions of neatness and orderliness have molded us to pray in single file. No one is to speak while another is speaking. Let each pray in his turn. Let each say basically the same thing as the others as well, for we all want to remember all the requests.

So on and on go our prayer meetings year after boring year, hearing and letting be heard those who dare to be so eloquent as to audibilize their prayers for all to admire. Such prayers were not always the case, nor should they be the standard. There is room for such praying such as before a congregation, leading them in prayer. But "prayer solos" are really not meant to be the meat of the prayer meeting. The prayers of the people are to be just that "prayers of the people." Prayers from the heart, not the head. Prayers of "passion" not of performance.

Group prayers were not solos, but orchestras led by a conductor. To be more Biblical, they were "symphonies." *Generally speaking group prayers of the people of God were noisy ordeals.* They often were lead by a ringleader, spokesperson, the maestro. Let us call him the conductor. His task was simply to get the group started in the right and same direction, while not overpowering the group or standing out himself. Each person was an instrument. Each tuned to the Spirit of God, gifted with a unique pitch, and fervency. Some deep melodic, some rich and resonant, others soft, others full, and on and on it goes. Variety and harmony make an orchestra. In an orchestra there may be a solo part but only for a short piece then all join in complimenting the melodic theme.

The Value of a Prayer Partner

"A three-fold cord is not easily broken." Ecclesiastes 4:12

When God created man he said, "It is not good that man should be alone." There are times to be alone and there are times to be with other people. Praying with a prayer partner is one of those special times in our lives when the Lord is very present.

Moses had Aaron and Hur (Exodus 17:10) to assist him in prayer warfare. Elijah needed an Elisha by his side to be encouraged that he was not the lone prophet. Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego prayed in the fire furnace and Jesus joined them.

Jesus often prayed with Peter, James and John. They had a prayer partnership. Later we see Peter and John going to the Temple together at the hour of prayer. Two disciples walked together on the road to Emmaus and their hearts burned within them as the Lord joined in their conversation.

How To Choose A Prayer Partner

Look carefully and prayerfully for someone...

1. Of the same gender (male, or female).
2. With whom you can confide confidentially, and you trust implicitly.
3. With whom you enjoy fellowship and sharing, and with a "kindred spirit."
4. Who is spiritually mature and who will keep the appointment..
5. Who needs you, as you need him/her.

Keeping One Another Accountable

The purpose of accountability is "To become more Christ-like in all of your ways." Remember it is Jesus who is the object of our search, our devotion, our sacrifice, and our affection.

Usually accountability is with one or two others, but no more.

Suggested Guidelines:

1. Try to ensure each person gets equal "air time." However, if one of you has a particular hard struggle one week, be flexible enough to focus on that issue even if it takes an hour.
2. Let each person work through a section at a time, then let the other(s) answer. This will keep things moving better. In a one-hour meeting each has 15 minutes to share, then pray a minimum 15 minutes.
3. Don't get bogged down on the questions and neglect the prayer time. Focus on praying for and with one another.

Simple Questions (Level One)

1. How has God blessed you this week? (What went right?)
2. What problem has consumed your thoughts this week? (What went wrong?)
3. Has any temptation overcome you? (Where did you fail?)
4. How can I pray for you this week? (Be specific - what do you want God to do?)

King James Version

Exodus 17:8-16

- 8 Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.
- 9 And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.
- 10 So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.
- 11 And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.
- 12 But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put *it* under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.
- 13 And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.
- 14 And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.
- 15 And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi:
- 16 For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn *that* the LORD *will have* war with Amalek from generation to generation.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

- 9 Two *are* better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.
- 10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.
- 11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm *alone*?
- 12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Matthew 18:18-20

- 18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.
- 19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.
- 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

New International Version

Exodus 17:8-16

8. The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim.
9. Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands."
10. So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill.
11. As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning.
12. When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up--one on one side, one on the other--so that his hands remained steady till sunset.
13. So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.
14. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."
15. Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner.
16. He said, "For hands were lifted up to the throne of the LORD. The LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation."

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

9. Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:
10. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!
11. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?
12. Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Matthew 18:18-20

18. "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.
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.
20. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Ministering One To Another

John 15:17	demonstrate love to one another
Romans 12:10	in honor preferring one another
Romans 15:5-7	like-minded and receive one another
Romans 15:14	admonish one another
Romans 16:16	salute one another
I Cor. 16:20	greet with kiss one another
Gal. 5:13	serve one another
Eph 4:2	forbearing one another
Eph 4:32	kind one another
Eph 4:32	forgiving one another
Eph 5:19	sing to yourselves & one another
Eph 5:21	submit one to one another
Col 3:16	admonish one another
I Thess 4:18	edify & comfort one another
Hebrews 3:13	exhort daily one another
Hebrews 10:24	consider, provoke to love one another
James 5:16	confess faults one another
James 5:16	pray for one another
I Peter 1:22	fervently love one another

Let us therefore find some practical ways to exercise the Word which we have received this evening. How can you practically do these "one another" things and to who is the "other" you should do this to?

The Praying Church

*Our desire is that our prayers be worship-based,
Spirit-led, word-focused, faith-filled, holy-surrendered to God.*

In a group prayer setting there are several ways to incorporate these six steps. One way is to introduce the step with Scripture reading and a song, then use conversational sentence prayers to express your heart to God on the specific matter before you. Another way is to assign someone in the group to lead in prayer for that area. Their's will be a longer prayer than seeks to be exhaustive in praise, thanksgiving, etc. If you have six people in the group each can take on category, if you are just three, then alternate each taking one from each section - focus on God, and focus on self.

“Priming the Pump” – Scripture and Songs prime the pump of prayer. We often find ourselves dull and unmotivated in prayer. It is helpful to have a specific plan to follow to keep yourselves from wandering aimlessly in a labyrinth of intercessory prayer. Use this prayer plan to help guide yourself into times of refreshing from the Lord. As you follow this biblical prayer pattern you will discover yourself enjoying prayer and wanting more.

Prayer Strategies

Private Prayers

Prayer Partner

Prayer Retreats (personal)

Prayer Circles

Prayer Concerts

Prayer Centers

Prayer Conferences