



## “Harnessing the Power of Unity”

Unity is the fuel that powers the engines that propel men toward success. Whether in a family, a community, a church, a business, or a nation, unity is one of the most essential components of a successful endeavor. This fact is most evident in the local churches that comprise the universal Body of Christ. Whenever there is success in overcoming obstacles of any kind in the local church, it can be readily traced to the overcoming power of unity.

Many congregations fall short of reaching their potential because of the covert and overt currents of disunity. These currents sometimes flow as a gentle stream and at other times as a raging river. If left unchecked, streams of discontent, whether visible or hidden, become a maelstrom, a crushing current of whirling dissension, which makes effective ministry virtually impossible.

Our Lord’s prayer that we might “be one” is evidence that “oneness” or “unity” is His disciples. This unity is essential to the success of our mission. The primary mission of the church is to “make disciples for Christ” whenever and wherever we can. Unity then becomes one of the most essential of Christ’s disciples who are building on the foundation that He laid. All who are not in agreement with Christ’s assigned mission to the church are incapable of uniting with those who are.

A primary hindrance to the success of the local church is the willingness to maintain fellowship with persons who are not in agreement with Christ’s mission. Sadly, in many congregations, the people who disgrace with Christ’s mission are often in the majority or have great influence over other congregants. The result is that compromises are made to keep the “influential” pacified and the excellent pursuit of Christ’s mission is abandoned. The desire to accommodate and please men rather than to please God, results in a dulling of the church’s focus. Eventually the focus of the church is diverted and it no longer seeks to accomplish Christ’s mandate to “make disciples”. But recovery is possible. The course of covert and overt streams of discontent can be reversed. The aim of this study is to seek to discover and recover the principles and practices of the early church that enables them to turn the known world upside down!

*Preface from the book by Ross Cullins*

# Harnessing the Power of Unity

# TAChronicle

## October 2013

The church where you are loved in the Lord and taught from His Word



Power. God's power. Without it, no church, no matter how big or small, can genuinely represent Him and His hope in this world.

We can and do lose His power and the capacity to genuinely reflect and represent Him. Some of His first disciples experienced that loss. In Luke 9:37-41, we find them defined by words that should never define those representing Christ: "but they could not." According to 1 Corinthians 4:20, "the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

#### We lose God's power when:

**We lack humility** (Luke 9:46-48). The disciples were attempting to use God's power to prove their own greatness.

**We lack compassion** (Luke 9:49-50, 54-55). God has poured out His power into our lives so that we can display His compassion in the world. He's not going to pour His power into our lives if we're seeking to use it to power up on others or tear them down.

**We lack faith** (Matt. 17:19-20). The disciples lost God's power because they had so little faith in Jesus. They had too little faith in the One who had given them the power in the first place. We need to remember that huge faith in the wrong person means nothing, whereas small faith in Jesus can (and does) change the world.

**We lack prayer** (Mark 9:28-29). This failure taught the disciples that prayer was the essential foundation for all effective living and ministry. We need to learn the same truth. Apart from Him, we can do "nothing."

Too often, when our churches (big or small) aren't making a difference in peoples' lives or the world, it's because we have the "form of godliness," but we're "denying its power." The good news is that we can get it back by admitting our need, remembering the plot, believing in God's ability and refusing to do anything apart from prayer—full dependence on Him. When we do, we will "bear much fruit" (John 15:5).

## KEYS TO THE HARVEST IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD



### 1. SEED

*Mark 4:31-32*

Without the seed there can be no harvest. The Word of God is the seed that must be planted in the hearts of men. Tiny seeds can become big trees.

### 2. SEASON

*John 4:35*

Harvest must take place during the harvest season, if not the harvest will be ruined. If we fail to harvest souls will be lost.

### 3. SERVANTS

*Matthew 21:28-30*

During the harvest time there is a great need for harvesters or servants. Willing and obedient. Every believer is called to servanthood and the harvest.

### 4. SOIL

*Mark 4:8*

Seed sown on thorny rocky soil will fail to yield fruit. Only in good soil will the ground produce 30, 60, and 100 fold. Therefore it is important to prepare the soil before planting. Through prayer the hearts of the people will be receptive to the Gospel.

### 5. SACRIFICE

*Psalms 126:5-6*

The fifth key to the harvest is the willingness to focus and sacrifice. ie. Time, money, comfort, convenience, energy. Without the element of sacrifice the people will not get wholeheartedly involved in the harvest.

### 6. SHOWERS

*1 Corinthians 12:3*

Rain is indispensable for a good crop. The Holy Spirit is indispensable for the harvest of souls. Without the Spirit of God all effort will be in vain.

### 7. SURE HOPE

*Galatians 6:9 Romans 12:11*

Sure hope and confidence with expectations that God will use us to bring the Harvest. All our efforts must be undertaken with a firm assurance that God will do it!! If we lose our confidence we will get discouraged and sink into doubt and reluctance. Labouring in faith, God will grant an abundant Harvest. Hebrews 10:35. Do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Carl Owens - 2nd  
 Alexis Hatten - 5th  
 Donald Gobert - 7th  
 Rozena Leslie - 8th  
 Kanequa Williams - 8th  
 Brilen Hunt - 9th  
 Margie Jackson - 9th  
 Diamond Gray - 10th  
 Rev. James Davis - 12th  
 Ke'Leigha Diggs - 14th  
 La Quinta Jones - 14th  
 June McCoy - 14th  
 Bria Williams - 14th  
 Bladrick Arceneaux - 15th



Reggie Hollie - 15th  
 Merlene Brown - 17th  
 Karen Masters - 17th  
 Wanda Jackson - 19th  
 G Anderson - 21st  
 Bri-Darian Hunt - 23rd  
 Karen Sloan - 24th  
 Kyle Everage - 25th  
 Gary Marshall - 26th  
 Daphne Lipscomb - 27th  
 Javon Blackshear - 30th  
 Aaron Brown - 30th  
 Breanna Jackson - 31st  
 Lynece Standley - 31st

## October

## THE ANTIOCH CHURCH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><b>National Breast Cancer Awareness Month</b></p> <p>6                      COMMUNION/                      Worship 10:30A                      SNL- 6p</p>	<p>7                      Mission I - 9AM</p>	<p>1                      TACKIDs-6pm</p> <p>8                      TACKIDs Choir                      6pm</p>	<p>2 People Who Pray                      12N                      GLOW WOMEN - 6p                      TEEN Bible - 6:30p                      PRAYER &amp; Bible                      Study-7p</p> <p>9 People Who Pray-12N                      GLOW WOMEN - 6p                      TEEN Bible - 6:30p                      PRAYER &amp; Bible Study-7p</p>	<p>3                      TAC Choir - 7p</p> <p>10                      TAC Musicians                      7p</p>	<p>4</p> <p>11</p>	<p>5                      FRATERNITY of MEN-                      9AM</p> <p>12                      Singles-6:30p</p>
<p>13                      Fellowship-10A                      Worship                      10:30A                      SNL- 6pm</p>	<p>14                      MEN's Choir                      Workshop                      6pm-8pm</p>	<p>15                      Refocus, Renew, Rejoice                      Choir Workshop                      Sopranos-6p-7p</p>	<p>16 People Who Pray                      12N                      Altos-6p-7p</p>	<p>17                      Tenors-6p-7p</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19                      Full Staff                      DEVELOPMENT-10AM                      Couples-7pm</p>
<p>20 Fellowship-10A                      TAC Choir                      Focus &amp;                      Worship-10:30A                      GREATER BROWN                      Spring - 3pm                      SNL- 6pm</p>	<p>21                      Mission I - 9AM</p>	<p>22                      TACKIDs-6pm</p>	<p>23                      People Who Pray                      12N                      GLOW WOMEN-6p                      TEEN Bible -6:30p                      Bible Study-7p</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26                      FRATERNITY of MEN-                      9AM                      MEN's Choir                      REHEARSAL 10AM</p>
<p>27                      Fellowship-10A                      Worship-10:30A                      MEN &amp; CHILDREN                      Health Fair-1pm                      SNL- 6pm</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29                      TACKIDs-6pm</p>	<p>28 People Who Pray                      12N                      GLOW WOMEN - 6p                      TEEN Bible -6:30p                      Bible Study-7p</p>	<p>31                      TRUCK, TRUNK                      &amp; TREAT                      6p-7:30p</p>	<p><b>PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH</b></p>	

# In Struggle for Freedoms, a Debt Is Due to Four Little Girls



Leonard Pitts Jr. says the bombing of 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church helped our nation search its conscience and continue the fight toward civil rights.

This is for four women who are not here.

It is for grandchildren who never existed and retirement celebrations that were never held. It is for Sunday dinners that were never prepared in homes that were never purchased. It is for children who were never born and fathers who never got to walk daughters down the aisle. It is for mortarboards that were never flung into the air, for first kisses that were never stolen, for dreams that ended even as they still were being conceived.

This is for four little girls who died 50 years ago today.

Died. It is, in this context, a misleading word. Makes it sound as if maybe 11-year-old Denise McNair and 14-year-old Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley and Carole Robertson succumbed to some disease. Hearing it, you might not realize they died because terrorists planted a bomb beneath an exterior stairway of their church and that it exploded while they were in the basement preparing for Sunday school. You might not realize that a chunk of concrete embedded itself in one child's skull or that another child's head was torn from her body.

Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., had been the nerve center of a human rights campaign that made the city notorious the previous spring, the place from which nonviolent armies poured to face snarling dogs and high-pressure hoses under the command of Police Commissioner Bull Connor. Because this was what you had to do if you were African-American and wanted to drink from a clean public fountain, try on clothes in a department store or buy a hamburger at a lunch counter in Birmingham.

The marchers won that battle, and their movement was at a summit of hope by the time it convened in Washington to march in support of federal legislation. "I have a dream today!" the great man roared, and it must have felt, on that transcendent day, as if that dream shimmered at the verge of reality.

Eighteen days later, the bomb exploded at 16th Street Baptist, where the Sunday school lesson was to have been "The Love that Forgives," and the summit of inspiration gave way to a yawning abyss of despair.

At a funeral for three of the little girls - Carole's family buried her separately - the great man sought to find the message in their deaths. This tragedy, he said, should challenge preachers who meet hatred with silence, politicians who use it to buy votes, a federal government that compromises with conservative hypocrisy and African-Americans who passively accept status quo.

He preached against despair and loss of faith, but he also let slip something that suggested how deeply even he, Martin Luther King Jr., a mighty preacher of the Christian Gospel, was shaken by this event. "Life is hard," he said, "at times as hard as crucible steel."

Indeed. Just when you think you know the depths to which people can sink, the extremes to which they can go in their sheer, pathological hatred, something happens that takes your breath away.

That's what that day did. The martyrdom of four little girls made a nation question its conscience - What kind of people kill children in church? - and so, helped turn the tide toward freedom. Congress said as much last week in awarding them its Gold Medal.

But to consider America 50 years later, still swathed in its tribalism, proud in its manifold hatreds, righteous in its denials, is to be reminded that tides are not permanent. They ebb and flow. And the battle to make America live up to the first sentence of its founding document - the one about the "self-evident" truth of equality - is ever ongoing.

"Change," King once said, "does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle." Such struggle is the price of freedom.

And a debt we owe four women who are not here.

*Sunday, September 15, 2013, Houston Chronicle - Submitted by Deacon Edward McCoy*