

# **Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion**

**Date** : 25 Aug 2024

**Sermon Title** : United for Mission

**Speaker** : Rev Peter Koh

**Text** : Acts 4:23-37

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Missions is not just about going overseas to minister, we can engage in missions at home, school, in the marketplace and the community around us. Missions is about doing the assignment that God has given to us, which is in the ministry of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:17-19) We are called to be a minister of reconciliation. However, in order to engage in missions, there is one important ingredient - Unity. We need to be united to engage in missions.

Today's passage continues from Acts 3 and the earlier verses of Acts 4 where Peter and John healed a man who had been crippled from birth at the Beautiful Gate. The Jewish leaders were disturbed by what they had done and what they were teaching about salvation in Jesus and seized Peter and John and put them in jail. They were commanded not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus again, but since these leaders could not decide how to punish them because the people were praising God for the miracle, they were released after receiving further threats. From this passage in Acts 4:23-37, let us consider the following three aspects which will help us to be effective and United for Mission.

### **A. United in Prayer (Acts 4:23-31)**

In these verses, we see that the disciples prayed with great confidence even when they had just been jailed and threatened. The disciples were faithful to do so in spite of severe persecution and did not ask God for safety or protection but instead asked God for boldness to share the Gospel to the world. (Acts 4:29) Without the disciples, we would not have churches planted all over the world. Such faith is not possible unless we are aligned to God. When we are united in prayer, it:

- Aligns our hearts with God's purposes
- Aligns our hearts to be Kingdom focused
- Aligns us to accomplish with God's power

Prayer is powerful. Through prayer we may align our hearts with God's purpose and be Kingdom focused. When we are aligned with God, the Holy Spirit gives us God's power to accomplish His work and to share the Good News.

In the Gospels, we see Peter and John tap on God's power which enabled a crippled man to walk. They were aligned with the Giver of life and with the Holy Spirit. We need

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# **Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion**

to be aligned in prayer so that our lives are aligned with God's will. This is critical for us to fulfill God's mission. Let us not feel self-conscious about the words we use in prayer because God knows our hearts and is not so concerned with how well we articulate our prayers.

## **B. United in Proclamation (Acts 4:32-33)**

The disciples were of one heart and one mind. They shared the same Good News without contradicting each other. They did not share merely out of their own knowledge or personal experience but from the Gospel of Truth found in the Word of God. The disciples also did not bring their past worship into their present worship. They did not subscribe to other forms of worship or beliefs but only from the one true Gospel. Their unity produces commonality in practice. (Acts 4:32; 2:44-45) Unity in proclamation:

- Cannot be organized
- Cannot be programmed
- Is a gift from God

This is because our faith is in the power of God, not in the power of man. (1 Corinthians 2:4-5) and so we need to rely on God's power to guide us in truth through the word of the Spirit. (cf. Revelation 2:29)

We need to consistently proclaim the Good News and to proclaim the Good News, we must be of one heart and one mind. This can only stem from a personal walk with God that is consistent. We need to be consistently aligned to God across our public, private and personal life and we can only achieve this when we have a real relationship with God.

## **C. United in Provision (Acts 4:34-37)**

The disciples were generous and shared all that they had. They recognized that they were stewards of all that God had given them. Do we understand that we are God's stewards for all that He has blessed us with? How are we using what we have been blessed with for missions, to reach out to our loved ones and touch the lives of others?

When we learn to share, we are able to move forward. Would we use our resources to support those who wish to be sent out to do God's work but do not have the resources? It is important to give to the church and in doing so we are partnering God in His Kingdom work through our giving. When we are united in provision, we are:

- Encouraged to bless – Needs are met in families and our communities when we use what we have been blessed to bless others.
- Encouraged to love – There will be no exclusiveness as we follow Jesus' example and share God's love with people from all economic and social backgrounds.
- Encouraged to give – There will be no clinging to what we have but we will be giving freely, and sharing what God has given to us. We give as the Lord leads us, with wisdom to help those who are in need.

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# **Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion**

## **Guard our unity in Christ**

Let us always guard our unity in Christ:

*As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

(Ephesians 4:1-3)

When our hearts are not united in the Truth, the results are:

1. Undermining others
2. Strife
3. Moral chaos, etc

We tend to at times want to show that we are better than others. This is not what God wants of us as this results in chaos when we want to prove ourselves. Although we may have good intentions and ideas, our good intentions and ideas may not be what God wants. We fight because we want our way, hence we end up with strife and a lack of unity. Instead of fighting amongst ourselves, we need to pray and align with God's purposes and Kingdom focus. Hence, we need to be united in prayer, proclamation and provision in order to move forward in God's Mission.

## **CONCLUSION**

Let us put aside our differences and seek to be aligned with God's purposes and be Kingdom focused so we can accomplish God's Mission with His power. May we also live our lives in alignment with God's Truth so we can be united in our proclamation of His Gospel and be good stewards of the blessings we have received so our unity in provision may touch and bless those who are in need of reconciliation to God. Above all, let us always heed apostle Paul's advice to "Guard our unity in Christ" to avoid undermining others, strife, moral chaos etc.

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# **Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion**

## **A. Review Sermon Application**

***Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God's truth.***

- 1a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk!?
- 1b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?

2. Missions is about doing the assignment that God has given to us, which is in the ministry of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:17-19)

What is your reflection on "United for Mission" with regards to your role in the 'ministry of reconciliation'?

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## **B. Relate Sermon Content**

***Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.***

3. Read Acts 4:23-37 reflectively.
  - a. Which of the 3 aspects of being United for Mission - United in Prayer, United in Proclamation and United in Provision, do you and your Life Group need to grow in? Share why this aspect was chosen.
  - b. What are some challenges you and your Life Group will face in growing in the above chosen aspect?
  - c. What is one thing you or your Life Group must do to overcome this challenge and truly grow if you take missions seriously?
  
- 4a. Why is it important to recognize that 'Unity in Proclamation' cannot be organized or programmed but is a gift from God?
- 4b. How united is your Life Group in provision for missions towards families, others in different social and economic status and those in foreign countries? How can you do better?
- 4c. With regards to missions, what are some reasons you see Paul urging us to 'Guard our unity in Christ' in today's context in your homes, workplace/school, Life Group, church, community?

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## **C. Testimonies, Prayers and Action**

***Purpose: Give glory to God, seek Him and embody His Word.***

5. Share a testimony where you have witnessed or experienced unity in prayer, proclamation or provision and how your or others were impacted.

OR

Give thanks to God for calling you to the ministry of reconciliation and pray that the Holy Spirit will enable you to boldly share and bring this Gospel Truth to others.

6. With a prayer partner, pray for the action steps/changes you have committed to in question 3 and 4b above, surrendering your fears and challenges to God. Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you as an individual and a group to commit and keep each other accountable in this journey to follow Christ in being united in prayer, proclamation and provision so His Gospel Truth may be shared boldly to those in need of reconciliation to Him.

### Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. Jesus It Is You – JPCC <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tn2pc1KxZcU>
2. The Jesus Way – Phil Wickham <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARSGgC9iQb0>
3. Cornerstone – Hillsong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fl15U2ifYzo>

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