

**Program:** SS Panel 2024 2 Q

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**Quarterly author:** Mark Finley

**Lesson Title:** #2 THE CENTRAL ISSUE: Love or Selfishness?

**Section title:** Wednesday - Caring for the Community

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**Note:** This color and font = quarterly text

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## THE CENTRAL ISSUE: Love or Selfishness?

**Read for This Week's Study:** *Luke 19:41–44; Matt. 23:37, 38; Heb. 11:35–38; Rev. 2:10; Acts 2:44–47; John 13:35.*

**Memory Text:** " ' "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand" ' " (*Isaiah 41:10, NKJV*).

Wednesday

April 10

## Caring for the Community

\*\*\*\*READ\*\*\*\*

The early Christian church grew not only because its members preached the gospel but because they lived the gospel. Believers modeled the ministry of Christ who "went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people" (*Matt. 4:23,*

NKJV). Jesus cared, deeply cared, for people, **and so did the New Testament church**. It was this unselfish love and commitment to meeting human needs combined with sharing the good news of the gospel in the Holy Spirit's power that made such an impact on the world in the early centuries of the Christian church.

**>>> Preach the gospel and if necessary use words**

>>> Share about John 13:35 ( This verse is used in the next day's lesson) and they were of one accord....

**Read Acts 2:44–47, Acts 3:6–9, and Acts 6:1–7. Although circumstances vary, what principles can we learn from these passages about authentic Christianity?**

**Acts 2:44–47** 44 Now all who **believed were together**, and **had all things in common**,  
45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.  
46 So **continuing daily with one accord in the temple**, and **breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart**,  
47 **praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily** those who were being saved.

**One accord continued**

**Acts 2:1** When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

**Psalm 133:1** Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* For brethren to dwell together in unity!

**Family in heaven and earth**

**Ephesians 3:14-15** 14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

**REF:>>>** Under the training of Christ the disciples had been led to feel their need of the Spirit. Under the Spirit's teaching they received the final qualification, and went forth to their lifework. No longer were they ignorant and uncultured. **No longer were they a collection of independent units or discordant, conflicting elements. No longer were their hopes set on worldly greatness. They were of “one accord,” “of one heart and of one soul.”** Acts 2:46; 4:32. Christ filled their thoughts; the advancement of His kingdom was their aim. In mind and character they had become like their Master, and men “took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13 AA 45.2

### Silver and gold I do not have

Acts 3:6–9 **6** Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: **In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.**”

**7** And he took him by the right hand and lifted *him* up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

**8** So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God.

**9** And all the people saw him walking and praising God.

### The devil tries to cause division

Acts 6:1–7 **1** Now in those days, when *the number of the disciples was multiplying*, **there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.**

**Hellenists = Grecians** [G1675](#) (Strong) Ἑλληνιστής, Hellēnistēs, hel-lay-nis-tace'

From a derivative of [G1672](#); a *Hellenist* or Greek speaking Jew: - Grecian.

> Hellenists (NKJV) = Grecians (KJV) - a Hellenist is a Greek speaker as more clearly pointed out in the king James version as a Grecian.

From SDABC

**Acts 6:1; Hellenists, That is, Greek – speaking Jews, or “Grecian Jews” (RV). Who not only spoke Greek, but had absorbed Greek culture. The hellenists were Jews of the dispersion.**

The Hellenist were Jews of the dispersion also called the diaspora who preferred to spoke Greek but also absorbed Greek culture.

#### **The solution**

**Acts 6:2** Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. **3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom,** whom we may appoint over this business;

**4** but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

**5** And the saying pleased the whole multitude. **And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,**

**6** whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

**7** Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, **and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.**

These New Testament believers followed Christ’s model, who as Peter expressed was “ ‘anointed . . . with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him’ ” (Acts 10:38, NKJV). Christ’s church was His body on earth, and it, too, in **these early centuries expressed Christ’s sacrificial love and concern for hurting, broken humanity. These believers were living examples of Christ’s compassion.**

#### **The devil doesn’t like that**

**In the great controversy raging in the universe, the devil wants to deface the image of God in humanity. The purpose of the gospel is to restore the image of God in humanity. This restoration includes physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual healing.**

**In John 10:10, Jesus reveals His plan for each one of us.**

“ ‘The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly’ ” (NKJV). He longs for us to be physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally stable, and spiritually whole.

This is especially true in the light of His promised return. **This world is facing an enormous crisis.** Jesus’ own predictions in Matthew 24 and Luke 21 foretell catastrophic conditions on the earth before His return. When Christ touches us with His healing grace, we long to touch others with the touch of Christ so that they can be made whole. Jesus sends us out into a broken world as ambassadors for Christ to touch others with His love. New Testament Christianity was characterized by the Christians’ love for one another and their communities.

### **God desires that we should be of one accord today**

John 17?? **15** I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

**16** They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

**17** Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

**18** As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

**19** And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

### **Jesus Prays for All Believers**

**20** “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;

**21** that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

**\*\*\*\*READ\*\*\*\***

**Let each one who claims to follow Christ esteem himself less and others more. Press together, press together! In union there is strength and victory; in discord and division there is weakness and defeat.**

These words have been spoken to me from heaven. As God's ambassador I speak them to you. 5T 488.2

Let everyone seek to answer the prayer of Christ: “That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee.” Oh, what unity is this! and



