



Empowering People to Change the World

**Clothed in Power:  
Synergy in Prayer and Synergy in Leadership**

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**The Peace Prayer  
(St. Francis of Assisi 1181-1226)**

**Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.  
Where there is injury, pardon.  
Where there is doubt, faith.  
Where there is despair, hope.  
Where there is darkness, light.  
Where there is sadness, joy.**

**O divine Master, grant that  
I may not so much seek  
To be consoled, as to console.  
To be understood, as to understand.  
To be loved, as to love.**

**For it is in giving that we receive,  
In pardoning that we are pardoned,  
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.**

**Clothed in Power**

**We are back in the book of Acts. In our previous study, we looked at the final commands of Jesus. And now we pick it up with Jesus leaving them...**

**Acts 1:9-11**

**Jesus' Ascension and Return**

- Isn't it interesting how many times angels are depicted as just being men? It surely makes you wonder how many angels have come into our path unaware. Ex. Malaga, Spain, angel in the red-light district...
- How sad these men and women must have been.
- These men and women have been with Jesus 24/7 for over 3 years.

- “Will so come in like manner.” Many believe that Jesus’s bodily ascension is the sign of how he will return—in a physical body, returning to the Mount of Olives.
  - This is also the location of Jesus Olivet Discourse on the End Times or Second Coming.
  - I’ve been to the Mount of Olives and Kidron Valley, where there are over 150,000 bone boxes buried, believing that Jesus will return on the Mount of Olives and enter the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem.
  - This is based on Zechariah 14:4, that the Mount of Olives will split in two and a great valley will be created to the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem, which is currently walled up.
  - Even the Muslims believe this. The Ottoman Sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, in 1541, sealed up the Eastern Gate to prevent the Messiah from coming in.

## Vs. 12-14

### Synergy in Prayer

- Isn’t it interesting that Jesus told them to wait for the promise of the Spirit? He did not tell them to pray. He told them to wait. But they chose to pray! The best thing to do when you’re troubled is to pray. They chose prayer, and Luke notes that.
- When you are lonely, unsure of what to do, or troubled, do you go to prayer? I know that too much of the time, I don’t pray first, but rather I worry first.
- My natural old man response: 1) Worry about the problem, 2) Try and figure out what to do, 3) worry some more, then 4) Pray.
- But for the disciples, it was their first response: PRAY!

***“Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.’” (Luke 11:11)***

- They had been schooled in prayer by the Great Master, Jesus
  - It was the only thing they asked him to teach them.
  - It was like they could see the signs and wonders and even experienced it when they had been sent out, but prayer, now that was a different matter.
- 
- They blocked out ten days for prayer and seeking God.
  - ten days!! Have you ever blocked out ten straight days just to seek God?

Ex. Liz and I have taken ten days of fasting and prayer several times in our careers. This church was birthed in ten days of fasting and prayer and 40 days of meeting together...

- Think about what they could have done: vacation in Joppa and wait. After all, it had been a very stressful time.
- Would God have responded if they had decided to take a break—I personally believe they would have never experienced God’s outpouring?

**They would have known Jeremiah 33:3**

***“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” (Jeremiah 33:3)***

***Jesus had said to them, “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good***

***gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:9-13)***

- Sounds like Jesus is saying that we have to seek hard after the things of God, His power, His presence, His Spirit
- Prayer is Spiritual CPR—it jolts us out of spiritual lethargy!

**Vs. 14** “continued with one accord.”

**“One Accord” = *homothumaden***  
**Homo: same, together in**  
**Thumaden: passion, vision, focus**

- One heart, one mind.
- Same breath, same passion, same mind, same temperature
- Same intensity; same fervor!
- Idea of running together
- Running alongside each other in a race toward common goal, one passion

Homer (Greek writer) translated this word: agreement.

- This word is used ten times in the book of Acts

**Synergy is the state in which the whole is more than the sum of the parts. The church in Acts was growing in synergy.**

**Synergy** is the state in which the whole is more than the sum of the parts.

- Ex. An ox can pull about 1,500 pounds, but two oxen can pull over 9,000 pounds!
- In the Old Testament, it is the idea of two oxen walking together like one ox. One shoulder, not two

***One theologian writes, “One accord helps us understand the uniqueness of the Christian community... the image is almost musical; a number of notes are sounded, which, while different,***

***harmonize in pitch and tone. Like 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

### **Synergy is powerful!**

- During our hard times. In your marriage, you need synergy in prayer

Ex. I have called it “breaking the sound barrier” of marriage—learning to pray together as a couple...

**Interestingly, they didn't just pray, they also planned...**

### **Synergy in Leadership**

#### **Vs. 15**

Peter is seen as the leader at this point. Despite his mistakes and cowardice at the time of the crucifixion, over the forty days when Christ was alive after the resurrection,

- Jesus must have reestablished him as the leader of the group. Despite all the mistakes he had made, Jesus saw the leadership in him and the calling.
- All of us make mistakes in our leadership. God always gives us a second chance. Learn from your mistakes in leadership. Keep learning. I've made some colossal mistakes in my life
- Peter will continue to be the major leader in the church for the first 15 chapters of Acts
- Luke's Commentary is always in parentheses: Remember, Luke is writing mainly to Gentiles:
  - The Jewish law required a minimum of 120 Jewish men for the establishment of a new community with its own council. In

Jewish terms, the group was large enough to form a new community.

- We know there were more followers because, according to 1 Cor 15, over 500 had seen him resurrected, but they were in Galilee

### **Vs. 16-17**

- There is a legitimate need for leadership to take Judas' place. They were obviously thinking of the 12 disciples because of the 12 tribes of Israel. These men are all Jews.
- Judas did have a place in the ministry. Historians believe that he was more than likely the most educated and the most gifted of all the disciples.
- Jesus even quotes the Old Testament (Psalm 41:9), "he who ate my bread has turned against me" in a prophetic way, referring to Judas
- Even Jesus had a betrayer on his leadership team. If you lead for any amount of time—and I mean lead people, staff, volunteers, there will be betrayal, jealousy, and envy

**Now we move into a parenthetical historical marker by Luke. The following is not what Peter said, but Luke, the author's addendum, a kind of digression for the reader to ponder.**

### **Vs. 18-19**

- The early church largely depended on the prophetic passages about the Messiah from the Old Testament, especially David, since they were primarily at first reaching out to Jews

Jesus had a betrayer in his inner group. Judas was a betrayer. If you're a leader, you will get betrayed by people.

## Vs. 20

### Peter continues his speech...

- The first passage is from Psalm 69:25
- *“Dwelling place”* refers to the field that Judas bought.
- A curse will dwell on that field. Tradition has it that it became a cemetery for aliens.
- The second passage referred to by Peter is Psalm 109:8
- This passage is used to show that scripture has provided the creation of a vacancy in the apostolic leadership team because of apostasy and not by death. (James would be killed later and not replaced.)

**Now we see the requirements they had for “Capital A” Apostle. I’ve always referenced a difference between the Lamb’s Twelve as the Apostles, never to be replaced.**

## Vs. 21-22

### **The Requirements of an Apostle (“Capital A”)**

- 1) Should have “hung out” with Jesus during his earthly life, beginning with the baptism of John. This was that there would be no dispute of who He was and what He did.
  - They needed to have spent time with Jesus and really seen and felt his heart. Spiritual Leadership is always an issue of relationship with God and people.

- Even at The Road, whenever there is a vacancy in leadership, we usually look within the church first...
- 2) He needed to have literally seen Jesus risen from the dead! They were not just following a great leader named Jesus, but God!
- The resurrection was the key point in the life of Jesus. To be one of the Lamb's Twelve, you had to have seen Jesus risen from the dead.

This was amended for the Apostle Paul. Though he had never walked with Jesus, he had seen Jesus on the road to Damascus through a vision.

Are these the only ones who can be called apostles?

### **The apostolically Gifted (“Lowercase a”)**

- Apparently not even by Luke, read Acts 14:14 “But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul.”
- Paul and Barnabas are called apostles.
- So, I want to make a distinction between “Capital A” Apostles and “Lowercase a” apostles.

Apostle: *apostolos*, to uncover something; a commissioner, a delegate; one who is sent out. I would add that a true apostle is one who is spreading the gospel with power, resulting in the planting of new churches or ministries.

### **“Lowercase a” apostle: “apostolically gifted”**

- **Apostolically gifted leaders are pioneers. Fire Starters.**
- **God-given authority to plant churches and lead movements**
- **God-given ability and authority to start businesses.**

- **A leader of leaders**

**Vs. 23**

### **Synergy in Leadership**

- There is only a little historical information on Barsabbas or Matthias.
  - According to Eusebius and the later writer Philip of Side, there is a story of Barsabbas or Justus being challenged to drink snake poison by unbelievers, and he did it in the name of Jesus and suffered no harm.
  - As for Matthias, Eusebius said that Matthias was one of the 70 disciples in Luke 10
  - Later tradition represents Matthias as a missionary to the Ethiopians.
- It is interesting that it was not a vote. It was a selection based on character and actual ministry.

**Vs. 24-26**

**The key point here is that the choice for leadership is in the Lord's hands.**

- It may have been that there was no big difference between the two men, and thus, they used a very respectful form of decision-making at that time in Israel.
- "Casting lots."
  - small stones or markers kept in a container in which they were shaken until one was thrown or sprang out. It was often used

for “yes and no” answers from God throughout the Old Testament.

- Proverbs 16:33 “The lot is cast into a lap, but the decision is wholly from God.”
- Mentioned in several places in Joshua (18:6,8,10)
- A form of the lot was the Urim and Thummim, which were kept in a pocket in the Ephod worn by the High Priest. They were probably two small objects (stones, dice, or pieces of wood) that were used to secure either a yes or no answer and were used at sacred functions like feasts in the selection of goats.

### **Criteria for Leadership at The Road Church**

- 1) Christ**
- 2) Character**
- 3) Competency**
- 4) Chemistry**

**In conclusion, as we evaluate a “Vintage Church” based on the model we find in Acts, we see just how important synergy in prayer and synergy in leadership must be; without either, we are less than what God wants in our church, in your marriage, in your business.**

#### **Ministry Time:**

- **How is your marriage today in relation to synergy in prayer and synergy in leadership?**
- **I want to challenge you as couples to come up together and rededicate your marriage to the Lord.**