

Tuesday, January 20, 2025

This week's devotions are written by Rev. James Lee. Born in Orange County, raised in the San Gabriel Valley, James desperately holds onto his SoCal roots while currently serving on the opposite coast as the lead pastor of Christ Community CRC on Long Island (about 60miles east of NYC). He has also had the privilege to serve in various capacities for the Christian Reformed Church denomination. James is married to his better half Jin-Young and together, they have three beautiful children.

Acts 4:31-32

*31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. 32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.*

In today's polarized society, unity seems out of reach. It especially seems difficult to achieve when many conflate and confuse unity for uniformity.

In Acts 3, Peter and John healed the lame man who was sitting by the gates of the temple courts. Because of their miraculous performance, the apostles faced stiff opposition. They were arrested and incarcerated on charges that were farfetched and unfair. But in moments of turmoil and despair, Peter leaned on the Holy Spirit. Peter stayed bold in his faith. After his testimony in the Sanhedrin, Peter and John were released, which motivated believers to pray more fervently.

Many can argue, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" We often get swayed by our situations and circumstances. But in Acts 3:24, people believed in a "Sovereign Lord... who made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them." We are called to know who our Lord is in order to experience true unity. In the storms of chaos that could shake believers to the core, believers are called to be "one in heart and mind." The believers mentioned in verse 24 were not unified in their thoughts and beliefs but rather unified in their purpose, love, and commitment to Christ. The shared value and virtue of faith in Christ led them to have a selfless spirit. That selfless spirit reminded the believers that they no longer needed to cling onto the things of this world but hold onto the things above.

The work of the Holy Spirit was evident during Peter and John's distress, and it led to believers leaning evermore to the power of the Holy Spirit. The more one leans on the Holy Spirit, the more one will be transformed. The transformation will reflect through the unity and loving actions of believers. Faith in Christ is visible.

How does our faith affect our daily lives? Does unity in Christ reflect in our actions, regardless of our circumstances or situations?