

# All Together Now

**October 15, 2017**

**Wonderful Mercy Church**



# Our Starting Place Experientially

- The key thing God spoke to us concerns the importance of doing life together
- Being a part of the faith community at Wonderful Mercy Church must be more than a Sunday thing



# Our Starting Place Spiritually

- **John 1:1** NIV  
“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
- **John 1:2** PASSION TRANSLATION  
“They were together—face to face, in the very beginning.”



# Our Starting Place Spiritually

- **John 15:26** PASSION TRANSLATION  
“And I will send you the Divine Encourager from the very presence of my Father. He will come to you, the Spirit of Truth, emanating from the Father, and he will speak to you about me.”
- Made in the image of God, why would we imagine that we have the capacity or freedom to go it alone?



# Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-37

- **Acts 2:42b** PASSION TRANSLATION

“Their hearts were mutually linked to one another...”

- **John 4:32a** PASSION TRANSLATION

“All the believers were one in mind and heart...”



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- The earliest followers of Jesus were a community in unity
- Contrast this with what God says he hates: *“anyone who stirs up trouble among the faithful”* (Proverbs 6:19 VOICE)
- **John 17:21**
  - NLT: “I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one.”
  - MSG: “The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind—just as you, Father, are in me and I in you.”



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- Important to distinguish between *unity* and *uniformity*: unity is God-centered, uniformity is human-centered
- Unity gives life; uniformity strangles it with sameness masquerading as submission
- We can reason together and come out on opposite sides of a discussion *and that's perfectly okay!*



# The Power of Unity

- **Matthew 18:20** AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION  
“For where two or three are gathered in My name [meeting together as My followers], I am there among them.”
- The fundamental power of unity is that it invokes and invites the presence of God





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- In Luke's account, there is no such thing as "personal relationship with Christ."
- An individual's faith profession in a moment in time is designed to lead him/her into community
- Author of Hebrews tells us not to neglect meeting together, yet 59% of Americans agree "Worshiping alone or with one's family is a valid replacement for regularly attending church." [Lifeway Research: ©2016]



# Jurgen Moltmann on Doing Life Together

“God as love...can only be witnessed to and experienced in a congregation small enough for members to know each other and accept each other as they are accepted by Christ. The Gospel of Christ crucified for us puts an end to religion as power and opens up the possibility of experiencing God in the context of genuine community as the God of love.” [Jurgen Moltmann and M. Douglas Meeks, *Hope for the Church: Moltmann in Dialog with Practical Theology*. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1979), 26.]



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