Of One Accord – Week 1

Purpose/Review

New Series – Of One Accord

Of One Accord – With one accord means to act unanimously, together, and in complete agreement without dissent. It signifies a state of unity where a group shares the same mind, the same purpose, and the spirit.

This phrase is often translate as… "of one heart and one soul."

How rare is that…?

One of the most common themes throughout the bible is… unity

Why does God tell us to strive for unity…?

It doesn't take long to look out into the world and see division…

OUTLINE-

Divisions in the World

How many conflicts are taking place throughout the world today….?

The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) recorded 65 state-based armed conflicts in 2025, the highest number since records began in 1946. Of these, 13 were classified as "wars" (exceeding 1,000 battle-related deaths) …**Academic/State-Based Count**

What are the causes of these conflicts…?

NOTE-

It can be disputes over land or over minerals

It could be over oil or water

Or conflicts can ariseover food

STORY-

When we hear the word Holocaust we think of Germany exterminating Jews in World War II

But 8-10 years before that, there was another type of Holocaust
That is rarely known or spoken about

It is known as… **TheHolodomor**

While the global term Holocaust typically refers to the systematic murder of Jews by Nazi Germany during World War II

The Holodomor was a man-made famine in Soviet Ukraine from 1932 to 1933 that killed an estimated 3.9 to 7 million Ukrainians.

The term literally translates to "death by hunger?

The Soviet Union…the USSR… controlled modern day Ukraine
Their General Secretary… their dictator… was Joseph Stalin

He needed something to export so that he could buy weapons
And chose to take the grain from Ukrainian Farmers by force

This may explain why some Ukrainians have such distain for Russians…

Sadly… Divisions can occur over religion

EXAMPLE-

During the middle ages we see that a division occurred between Ireland and England
Beginning in 1177 King Henry II invaded Ireland around the city of Dublin
For the next 300 years England's control was confined to this small area.

Then in the 1534 King Henry the VIII broke from Rome and the Catholic Church
Eventually the protestant denominations emerged

And in the early 1700's laws were passed preventing Irish Catholics
From owning land or holding any public office

That division between Protestant Christians and Catholic Christians
Came to America in the 1840's when Irish Catholics settled in Philadelphia

This division culminated in what is known as "The Bible Wars"

Why…?

Because the public schools required daily readings from the King James bible
A bible translation that Catholics did not use

This division between Catholics and Protestants in America lasted for over 100 years
When John F. Kenndy ran for President
Protestants complained that the Pope would rule America

STORY-

When I was 20 or so, I felt this deep desire to be connected to the church
Mind you I had no real understanding of the church
But looking back God was beginning to move in my heart

So what did I do to fulfill that desire… I bought a gold cross and wore it on a chain around my neck

The first time I wore it and walked through the house my mother freaked…!!!

Why are you wearing a cross …. Only Catholics wear crosses…!!!

You see when she was a teenager… She had a good friend who was Italian…
And this friend was Catholic… My mom was Presbyterian

One day they got into a disagreement about their faith….
Her Italian friend said… "You're not going to go to heaven because you're not Catholic."

Apparently… that disagreement colored her views of the Catholic faith

Divisions within Denominations

FACTS-
When we look at Christian denominations today
We can see divisions occurring because of disagreements

The Catholic church went through division in the 1960's
Because they stopped using Latin in the church services

The Methodist Church has split several times over social issues
Issues such as marriage between a man and woman

The Presbyterian Church has also seen several divisions
Such as ordaining women as Ministers

NOTE-
The point is this… There is no perfect church on this side of eternity…

What we do know is that Jesus wants us to be united…

John 17
11b… Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.

Does that mean we unite with every denomination who calls themselves Christian…
No

NOTE-
Divisions are not new in the church
The early church had to deal with Judaizers and Gnostics

This is why the early church developed creeds…

We have the Nicene Creed and the Apostles creed…

These creeds teach us the foundational beliefs of the Christian church…

The Apostles Creed is on the back of your bulletin… **READ?**

Do all denominations have to have creeds…. No

But all Christian denominations must believe… what the Apostles Creed proclaims

The bible teaches us that when we are in heaven… we will be a perfect church…

We will worship Jesus in perfect unity…

This is what each of should long for…

Does that unity exist on earth today…. No

Has that unity ever existed on earth… Yes… But… for a very brief time…

Reading

Acts 4
32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul…

Doctrinal

NOTE-
Unity among believers is what Jesus prayed for
Unity among believers is what Luke is describing
Unity among believers was an answer to Jesus' prayer

The bible tells us that this early church was made up of people from all walks of life

The early church was made up of land owners
Others that owned homes
And still others who had nothing

Regardless of their social standing… they were of One Accord
They were of one heart and soul…

They were all of one heart, and of one soul. Though there were many, very many, of different ages, tempers, and conditions, in the world, who perhaps, before they believed, were perfect strangers to one another, yet, when they met in Christ, they were as intimately acquainted as if they had known one another many years… **Matthew Henry**

As I said… this unity in the early church did not last long…
Human nature kicked in and divisions began

One of the more well-known divisions occurred in the church in Corinth

OPEN YOUR BIBLES TO 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Listen to what Paul had to deal with…

1 Corinthians 3
1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, 3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? 4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men?
5 What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. 7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. 8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

Divisions within the Church

Jesus knew that division would occur…

This is why He prayed for unity among believers

And for a very brief moment… some early believers experienced that unity…

So… let's take a closer look at our reading

And try to find some guidelines to follow in an attempt to live in unity…

Application

Acts 4
32 **And the congregation** of those who believed were of one heart and soul…

32 And the congregation
Congregation – A multitude; a crowd; a great number

NOTE-

On the day of Pentecost 3000 became members of the church
During this time that Luke is describing more than 5000 belonged to the church

5000 individuals from all walks of life…

Acts 4
32 And the congregation **of those who believed** were of one heart and soul…

…of those who believed

Believed what…?

Acts 2
42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

…. Of those who believed

They heard the Word of God from the apostles' teachings
Not only did they hear the Word of God… they received it

Philippians 2
1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

Be of the same mind… maintaining the same love

United in spirit and be intent on one purpose

Acts 4
32 And the congregation of those who believed **were of one heart and soul**…

… were of one in heart and soul

Luke says that thousands of people are of "one heart and soul."
They join together in purpose, and in thought, and in action.

What was the driving force that allowed them to live in unity…?

The Holy Spirit is in them and guiding them as a group.

It is the same Spirit that lives in us…

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday… today… and forever…

OPEN YOUR BIBLES TO Ephesians 4:1-6

NOTE-
These verses describe the unity that is available
If was allow the Holy Spirt to lead us as a group of believers

Ephesians 4
1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.
NOTE-

In the early church the idea of unity wasn't theoretical
It wasn't a dream… it was something tangible

Philippians 2
3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

NOTE-
Of one mind… the idea is not mainly to urge us toward identical convictions
But toward a common, unified mindset or attitude.

The great gospel precept passed upon us; that is, to love one another. This is the law of Christ's kingdom… This is always in their power, and always their duty… **Matthew Henry**

Of one mind and soul…

It transcended the deep cultural and ethnic and social barriers

Rather than being a theoretical agreement on doctrine
It was a radical reconciliation where Jews and Gentiles
Slaves and free… rich and poor…

They lived together as one family, sharing meals, worship, and resources.
Of One Mind and Soul…

Why is this precept so important…?

John 17
20 I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; 21 that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.

I like what Alexander MacLaren says about these verses…

Jesus prays that they may all be one. And their unity is no mere matter of formal external organization nor of unanimity of creed, but it is a deep, vital unity. The pattern of it is the unity of the Father and the Son… **Alexander MacLaren**

When the world sees us living… Of One Accord
This should be the desire of every Christian

This should be the prayer of every church…
Because this was the prayer of Jesus…

Of One Accord… this should not be a slogan
Something one puts on a bumper sticker

It should be the result of a transformed heart…

It's not just a way of thinking, but a combined way of thinking and feeling, or a combination of conviction and disposition… **John Piper**

CLOSE