



WEEK 4 || ACTS 4:32-6:7

UNITED CHURCH

Leadership guru, Andy Stanley says work teams only succeed when the team believes that a 'win for one is a win for all.' And the same principle applies for the church. The church works better when it's unified in its mission.

Have you ever been part of a group (in a work, uni, or even a social setting) where people had *conflicting* aims or ambitions? What was the outcome?

THE STORY SO FAR...

Read Acts 4:32-37

1. What marks the 'believers' out from those around them? (cf. 2:42-47)

2. What attitude do these Christians have to their possessions?

How much would you be prepared to give to someone in need?

3. Why are they willing to share all they had with each other?

DIVIDED MOTIVES

The early church was united in the gospel. The good news that the one who died for sin is King even changed what they did with their money and possessions. They fully understood the blessings and riches they had received in Jesus, and so were generous to others in the church. They were united in living under the sacrificial kingship of Jesus.

Except some weren't...

4. Read Acts 4:36-5:11 and compare the two case studies of Barnabas, who was motivated by the gospel, and Ananias and Sapphira who were not.

	Barnabas	Ananias & Sapphira
<i>What do they do?</i>		
<i>What's their motivation?</i>		
<i>How does God respond?</i>		
<i>What's the outcome?</i>		

5. What effect did God's action have...
 a) on the church? (5:5, 11)

b) on the wider community? (5:11-14)

6. From what Peter says, do you have to sell your property and give?

What is important when giving?

It's easy to do our good deeds for the sake of appearances, rather than from the heart - but it's deadly! God doesn't care about our appearances. He cares about our hearts and our commitment to him.

As the church grew, so did their growing pains. Although they were committed to sharing the gospel, it soon became obvious that the church also needed people who were dedicated to caring for the needy and the marginalised.

Read Acts 6:1-7

7. What solution did the Apostles come up with?

What did this free up the Apostles to do?



8. What is the immediate response to this solution? (v7)

9. In what ways were the first Christian communities curiously attractive to the people around them?

GOSPEL VISION

10. If we're a church committed to living under the kingship of Jesus and "*showing the love of Jesus to our neighbors, our city and our world*", what would it look like for you to be motivated by the gospel in the following different areas of life?

- Work
- Possessions
- Money
- Serving at church
- Family
- Study

The church was completely changed by the good news that the one who died for sin is King. And it's still the same for us today. If we're a church on gospel mission, we need to be a unified church. United in our commitment to the gospel and to each other.