



APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN

## Counseling and Family Services

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### Teamwork

We cannot begin to completely cover the concept of teamwork in one short article. However, we do want to explore the biblical precepts around teamwork principles. In short, teamwork is the joint action of a group in which each person subordinates his or her individual interests and opinions to the unity and efficiency of the group or team. In other words, the cause of the group is deemed more important than the cause of each individual participant or group member. As long as each person within the group is yielding their personal agenda to the main cause, the team will function well. When that ceases to be true and self-interest begins to dominate, the team will experience dysfunction.

There are literally countless instances where teamwork is necessary to accomplish specific goals. Those instances run the gamut from children on a playground to astronauts in space and everything else in between. Teamwork is also necessary in the body of believers for it to function properly and be a glory to God. The serving and promoting of self are not welcome elements of successful teams and this is certainly no different within the church body.

The Bible is full of examples and exhortations for us to be fully engaged in working together for the betterment of the whole and to the glory of God. We are reminded of some of the functions of a team and why teamwork is more successful in accomplishing certain goals than individual efforts. If one team member falters, another can lift him or her up. If one member of the team is threatened, others can come to the rescue. We are even reminded that more heat is generated by two than one alone.

*Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. <sup>10</sup>For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. <sup>11</sup>Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? <sup>12</sup>And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."*

As Christian ambassadors, we are not in the Lord's vineyard alone but called to be workers together with Him.

*2 Corinthians 6:1 "We then as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."*

Members of a team can keep each other accountable and help one another to stay focused and on task.

*Proverbs 27:17 "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."*

Team members are to help each other toward a common goal and be supportive of the work of others rather than striving to fulfill their own personal objectives.

*3 John 1:5-8 "Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; <sup>6</sup>Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do*

*well: <sup>7</sup>Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. <sup>8</sup>We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth."*

The Bible is very clear that each member of the team, namely the church, is endowed with talents and gifts specific to the individual and that the church can function effectively only when each one is encouraged to use those talents to their fullest potential.

*Romans 12:4-8 "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: <sup>5</sup>So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. <sup>6</sup>Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; <sup>7</sup>Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; <sup>8</sup>Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness."*

The effectiveness of a team is hampered by strife and division within the ranks. Progress towards a common goal is compromised when individual agendas are promoted and team members start taking sides.

*Romans 15:5-6 "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup>That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

*1 Corinthians 1:10 "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."*

Sharing duties and commendation are both necessary in effective teams. No individual should have to carry more than his or her share of the load and, likewise, no one person should receive special credit or accolades.

*Hebrews 13:16 "But to do good and to communicate [share, distribute] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."*

*1 Corinthians 12:36 "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."*

Perhaps one of the most striking examples of team unity and effectiveness is within the Godhead Itself. The Bible clearly shows us that our God is a triune God with three distinct persons within one Deity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, each with distinct functions and attributes but with a common goal and purpose. God is unified in every way, bound together in perfect love where there is no room for disharmony.

*John 16:7 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."*

*John 17:20-23 “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; <sup>21</sup>That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. <sup>22</sup>And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: <sup>23</sup>I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”*

*2 Corinthians 13:14 “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.”*