

## **God's Math for Unity**

### **Ready:**

“Just one thing: As citizens of heaven, live your life worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or am absent, I will hear about you that you are standing firm in one spirit, in one accord, contending together for the faith of the gospel,”—Philippians 1:27?

### **Set**

As a college football coach, my definition of unity has largely been shaped by what I experience every Saturday in the fall. Stadiums filled to capacity, crowds roaring in unison, voices combining to deafening levels, making it nearly impossible to communicate on the field.?

My definition of unity—as well as the world’s—is usually based on quantity. Vast numbers of people joining forces as one. That isn’t necessarily wrong, but I believe the Word of God emphasizes the?quality?of unity far more than the?quantity.?

I see God’s math for unity is different than mine. In His economy, true unity for His followers (the Church)?subtracts?before it?adds, and?divides?before it?multiplies.?

After Jesus ascended to heaven, we read in Acts how the first century church shared His Word amidst incredible persecution—unafraid of prison or death. The numbers initially reduced due to the fear of man, but then they vastly multiplied as the unsaved world saw faithful Christians living out a unique love for their “Coach” and “teammates.” As God’s Word was preached and believers sacrificially lived as great teammates, the church spread powerfully across Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East—eventually reaching the entire world.?

When you compete with a team or even individually, consider the quality of the company you keep, the unity within your camp. The spectators should not only see unity for the sake of winning and camaraderie but something unique and different than the others. It's the team of believers that compete for the audience of One and sharing this special unity with others to experience for themselves.

### **Go**

1. When are you tempted to pull away from others instead of recognizing your need for community??
2. How might you ask God to bring unity with those around you??
3. What can your team do today to become a closer-knit unit??

### **Workout**

Acts 23:1

John 11:52

### **Overtime**

Father, in the backwards living of faith, you call for selflessness over self. Help me recognize the importance of those around me, and stand with my brothers and sisters in unity for Your glory. Amen.



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