

# Working as a Team

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## INTRODUCTION:

A. Whether in a sports genre, the business world or the Lord's Church, teamwork is a must.

1. **Illustration:** 1<sup>st</sup> Play

2. **Illustration:** Our baseball team in Bridgeport, Alabama

3. Baseball camp – Short stop from a major high school. School . . . Baseball

4. In baseball it is not 1 against 9 but 9 against 9.

5. In football it is not 1 against 11 but 11 against 11.

6. In basketball it is not 1 against 5 but 5 against 5.

B. 1974 Western movie "Billy Two Hats" starring Gregory Peck as Arch Deans, with Desi Arnaz, Jr. as Billy Two Hats, and Jack Warden playing the role of Sheriff Henry Gifford. David Huddleston played the role of Copeland, the Saloon Owner.

1. Arch Deans and Billy Two Hats are traveling together, sort of as partners. There is a scene wherein Gregory Peck, in speaking his lines with his character's Scottish burr, has a scripture included . . . a meaningful scripture for our subject:

2. **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10** - "Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up."

3. Friendship . . . Teamwork . . . Unity . . . that passage supports a number of subjects.

C. Teamwork is a must for each and every congregation.

1. A team is two or more persons joined in a cooperative activity.

2. Teamwork is joint action taken by a group of people.

D. Biblical examples:

1. **Luke 5:10-11** - And so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him. **Teamwork**

NOTE: Partners in fishing for fish . . . Became partners in fishing for men.

- A larger team
- A better team
- A traveling team
- A learning team
- A serving team
- An evangelizing team
- A world-changing team

2. **1 Corinthians 3:9** - For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. **Teamwork**
  3. **Nehemiah 4:6** - So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work. **Teamwork**
  4. Biblical teamwork is seen in:
    - a. Old Testament
      1. Noah and his three sons (Ham, Shem, & Japheth)
      2. Moses and Aaron
      3. Joshua and the Israelites at Jericho
      4. David and Jonathan
      5. Naomi and Ruth
    - b. New Testament
      1. Jesus and His apostles
      2. Paul and Barnabas
      3. Paul and Silas
      4. Peter and John
- D. There is no "I" in teamwork.
1. **Ephesians 4:3** - Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
  2. We are teamed up against the evil one.
- E. There is something for everyone to do in the cause of Christ among men. Every age has its place in God's work.
1. About **25%** of the members assume **100%** of the responsibility in local congregations.
  2. Another report said about **8%** of the members do all the work within the local congregation.
  3. Averaged together those two numbers are only **16.5%**
- F. In congregations large and small . . . Teamwork is a must. Jesus said in **Matthew 12:25** - "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand."

## TEAMWORK IS NEEDED IN THE ELDERSHIP

- A. Elders should:
1. Stand as one
  2. Withstand as one
  3. Speak as one
  4. Lead as one
- B. **Illustration:** The five elders at Tusculum. Met each Monday night. Regardless of their votes (4 -1, 3-2, etc.) They emerged speaking as one . . . They were a team. You never knew who voted in the affirmative or the negative.

## **HINDRANCES TO TEAMWORK . . . THE DEVIL WILL SEEK TO USE THEM.**

- A. A spirit of self-centeredness will inhibit teamwork.  
People who are only interested in themselves and their own obligations and not in those of the other members will inhibit teamwork.
- B. People who feel they have to be the "Star performer" will hinder the proper spirit of teamwork.
- C. People who are not considerate of others will hinder the spirit of team work.  
One member must care about all the other members of the team working together for the accomplishing of God's will.
- D. People who will not work . . . Will not carry their part of the load . . . Will hinder the team work spirit.
- E. People who possess a critical spirit will hinder teamwork.
  - 1. Some people just seem to major in finding fault.
  - 2. It doesn't matter what is under consideration, they are against it or find something wrong with it.
- F. People who seek to be preeminent, will hinder the harmony of teamwork.
  - 1. We read of such a man in the New Testament. **3 John 9** - I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us.
  - 2. Good teamwork is not found where the spirit of Diotrephes surfaces.
- G. Teamwork is further hindered by:
  - 1. People who do not care.
  - 2. People who will not show up for the work to be done.
  - 3. People who offer more excuses than effort.
  - 4. People who are not encouraging of the efforts of others.

## **ESSENTIALS (INGREDIENTS) TO GOOD TEAMWORK.**

- A. A right desire to cooperate with others.
  - 1. The church is One Body . . . With One Head . . . But with many members.
  - 2. Every member has something to contribute to the overall efforts of the work of the church.
  - 3. In unity and harmony, we are a team utilizing teamwork to carry out the Lord's will in our community.
- B. A strong confidence in other members of the team.
  - 1. You must be willing to trust others to do their job.
  - 2. You have confidence that others have confidence and interest in accomplishing the task at hand.
  - 3. Confidence that others are just as concerned about their work as you are about yours.
  - 4. Since 911 our nation has heightened its appreciation for policemen, firemen, and hopefully our military. "Go through a door." "Enter a building."

C. The best effort in everything you do.

1. There is no room for the "I'll just get by" attitude.
2. A Christian should always do his or her best . . . It is for God.
3. When each member gives 100% effort to the task at hand . . . Success will occur.

D. Successful teamwork involves a desire to finish the task.

1. A half-finished wall will not provide adequate defense for a city.
2. A half-finished house is uninhabitable.
3. **Nehemiah 4:6** - So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.
4. There is not place to stop until you have finished the course set before you. The apostle Paul expressed it well in **2 Timothy 4: 6-8** - For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.
5. The finish line is the only place any race should end!

E. Patience is a must in teamwork . . . Forbearance

1. Members of the team develop at different rates.
  - a. Some are mature Christians.
  - b. Others are babes in Christ.
  - c. Some have been taught over many years.
  - d. Some are just beginning to learn.
2. **Ephesians 4:2** - With all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love.

F. Contentment is a must for successful teamwork.

1. Be content with the part you play in moving the church forward.
2. See your role as important . . . It really is!

**CONCLUSION:**

A. It isn't easy for a congregation to accomplish every goal it establishes.

Certainly it would be much easier if the Devil wasn't working against us.

1. In football, it would be much easier to score touchdowns if there were not 11 defensive men on the opposite of the ball.
2. In baseball, it would be easy to hit inside-the-park homeruns if there were no players on the infield or in the outfield.
3. In basketball, it would be easier to score if there were not five opposing defenders playing against you.
4. If there were no goalies in hockey or goal keepers in soccer, it would be easier to score.

B. The Lord's team is the best team for you and your efforts in order to advance the cause of Christ among men.

C. **Illustrations:**

1. **ILLUSTRATION: 1000-mile Dog Sled Run**

Every year in Alaska, a 1000-mile dogsled race, run for prize money and prestige, (Iditarod) commemorates an original "race" run to save lives. Back in January of 1926, six-year-old Richard Stanley showed symptoms of diphtheria, signaling the possibility of an outbreak in the small town of Nome. When the boy passed away a day later, Dr. Curtis Welch began immunizing children and adults with an experimental but effective anti-diphtheria serum. But it wasn't long before Dr. Welch's supply ran out, and the nearest serum was in Nen-ana, Alaska—1000 miles of frozen wilderness away.

Amazingly, a group of trappers and prospectors volunteered to cover the distance with their dog teams! Operating in relays from trading post to trapping station and beyond, one sled started out from Nome while another, carrying the serum, started from Nen-ana. Oblivious to frostbite, fatigue, and exhaustion, the teamsters mushed relentlessly until, after 144 hours in minus 50-degree winds, the serum was delivered to Nome. As a result, only one other life was lost to the potential epidemic. Their sacrifice had given an entire town the gift of life.

2. **ILLUSTRATION: Geese**

It's those stately geese I find especially impressive. Winging their way to a warmer climate, they often cover thousands of miles before reaching their destination. Have you ever studied why they fly as they do? It is fascinating to read what has been discovered about their flight pattern as well as their in-flight habits. Four come to mind.

1. Those in front rotate their leadership. When one lead goose gets tired, it changes places with one in the wing of the V-formation and another flies point.

2. By flying as they do, the members of the flock create an upward air current for one another. Each flap of the wings literally creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. One author states that by flying in a V-formation, the whole flock gets 71 percent greater flying range than if each goose flew on its own.

3. When one goose gets sick or wounded, two fall out of formation with it and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with the struggler until it's able to fly again.

4. The geese in the rear of the formation are the ones who do the honking. I suppose it's their way of announcing that they're following and that all is well. For sure, the repeated honks encourage those in front to stay at it. As I think about all this, one lesson stands out above all others: it is the natural instinct of geese to work together. Whether it's rotating, flapping, helping, or simply honking, the flock is in it together...which enables them to accomplish what they set out to do.

### 3. ILLUSTRATION: How to Hold a Team Together: (Bear Bryant)

I'm just a plow hand from Arkansas, but I have learned how to hold a team together. How to lift some men up, how to calm down others, until finally they've got one heartbeat together, a team. There's just three things I'd ever say:

- If anything goes bad, I did it.
- If anything goes semi-good, then we did it.
- If anything goes real good, then you did it.

That's all it takes to get people to win football games for you.

D. Although the world is filled with stories and examples of teamwork . . . The Lord's church should be excelling them all.

E. Acrostic for Teamwork

- T** - Together as a unified unit of brethren.
- E** - Each one of us . . . Hopefully Everyone of us.
- A** - Achieving the work God has set before us.
- M** - More than we could ever do on our own
- W** - Working the mighty work of God
- O** - Overcoming the opposition of the evil one.
- R** - Relying upon God's Will . . . God's Word . . . God's power for success.
- K** - Kingdom growth occurs and people are led from here to eternity.

F. God's Plan for Man's Salvation