**New Hope Global Sermon April 13, 2021**

**The Constant Prayer of the Waiting Disciples**

**Introduction**

As I began my study of Acts for spring 2021, I was struck with the word **homothymadon** from Acts 1:14. It describes the constant prayer of the waiting disciples after Jesus’ ascension. They were told to return to Jerusalem and wait for the promised Holy Spirit. They did. “Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son ofAlphaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas son of James all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.”

It was a diverse group with women participating equally with the men – a model Jesus himself had inaugurated and blessed in his honor of women.

**Homothymadon**

The word literally means “with one mind or passion. “ This kind of prayer is a favorite theme of Luke and “occurs 31 times in Acts and appears in 20 of its chapters. [It represents] the unanimity in community life which is another of Luke’s themes. The word translated ‘constantly’ is often connected with prayer (Acts 1:14, 2:42, 46, Rom.12:12, Col. 4:2)…It means resolute, sometimes obstinate, persistent. The idea of prevailing prayer comes from this word” (Ajith Fernando, *NIV Application Commentary, Acts,* p. 74).

Homothymadon marked the early church’s community life in Acts: “Every believer was faithfully devoted to following the teachingsof the apostles. Their hearts were mutually linked to one another,[i.e. became partners] sharing communion, and coming together regularly for [all kinds of] prayer.(Passion). It was the model of prayer Paul advocated for the church believers in Rome: ”Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3A+11-12&version=NLT#fen-NLT-28218a)] 12Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying,” and for the believers in Colossae: 2Be faithful to pray as intercessors who are fully alert and giving thanks *to God*. (Passion)

“Obstinate, persistent, prevailing prayer’ among those experiencing ‘unanimity in community life.” That’s the experience of prayer God has graced our New Hope Global Church with. Prayer for one another; prayer united around God’s purposes and supporting each of us as we seek to live out those purposes. Prayer that suffers and perseveres, and prayer that celebrates together. As New Hope Global on line has morphed into a supportive fellowship, alongside our What’s App Community connection, it is this prayer together each week that has sustained each of us.

It has held us through dark valleys of discouragement and loneliness. It has undergirded our members who have lost loved ones in death or mental or physical sickness this year. It has brought the sustaining presence of the Holy Spirit to our PhD students who have struggled as minority students in their white dominated academic institutions in the States. and provided their staying power to press on. And, in the midst of the enormity of the Covid 19 sufferings and uncertainties, it has helped bond us together when in-person fellowship was so sharply curtailed.

Constant, prevailing prayer cleared all the obstacles for Joe and Miyuki to have a successful marriage ceremony with family in Hawaii. It has brought about Tsegaab’s twin blessings of money for his next PhD semester, and the 100 new converts to Christ from his preaching mission in Woliso Ethiopia. It has given Alex the acceptance of his articles for publication in prestigious law journals (a necessity for his application as Associate tenured Law Professor), and the acceptance of our book *Thinking Outside the Box* by William Carey Publishers.

It has brought healing and hope to so many of us. So I know I am not the only one who can testify that homothymadon has been my lifeline this past year.

**Conclusion**

The early disciples practiced homothymadon prayer as they waited for the Holy Spirit. And the Spirit did come and rained down on them and the church was born!!!

We also wait – for jobs, for funding, for travel restrictions globally to lift, for places to live and ministry to begin again. And we wait together in unanimous community in hope, just as the early believers did. We are trusting God’s word. And we know from God’s promises that those who wait for the Lord will not be put to shame. We can say with David, “I believe with all my heart     that I will see again your goodness, Yahweh, in the land of life eternal! 14Here’s what I’ve learned through it all:     *Don’t give up*; don’t be impatient; be entwined as one with the Lord.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+27%3A13-14&version=TPT#fen-TPT-349a)]    Be brave and courageous, and never lose hope.    Yes, keep on waiting—*for he will never disappoint you*! (Ps. 27:13-14 Passion)

What great miracles will we witness as we move on in 2021? More evidences of God’s blessing. He honors and abundantly answers homothymadon prayer.

Hallelujah! Amen. Dr. Mary Lou Codman-Wilson, Pastor

 New Hope Global Fellowship

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