

## ***“Synergism”***

November 2008

Hymn “Let us break bread together.... VU 480

Scripture 2 Corinthians 12:5-10

Verse 10: “Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.”

Prayer Let us pray –We give thanks, O God, that as we gather we know ourselves to be among friends. We thank you for the encouragement and understanding that they bring to our lives. We thank you above all though for the presence of Jesus, in whom is fullness of understanding and the richest of encouragement. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Lesson In ancient Greek literature there is a story that shows the power of working together, or synergism.

*An aged, dying father called his seven sons around him. He gave each one a stick and told them to break it. Each son easily broke his separate stick. The old father then bound seven sticks and gave the bundle to his eldest son and told him to break the bundle. The eldest son could not do it. Then the second son was commanded to try. He could not, nor could any of the rest. “So is it to be of you,” said the father. **“Alone you are weak, together you are strong.”***

Synergism is derived from the Greek word “synergos” meaning “working together”. It means that by joining with others, common objectives can be more easily accomplished. There is strength in numbers when you multiply your efforts through others.

The Christian church, men’s ministries and AOTS work best when we work together. The mission of reaching out to people of all ages, of all races, of all genders, of all places, has greater effectiveness when we join hands in a common effort. Using the power of synergism, the seeker, the poor, and the ill, can be helped, can become part of your community and can learn about the love of Jesus.

Synergism also combines the talents of individuals. Those who have computer skills are teamed with those who have gifts in teaching or public speaking. Ministers can be teamed with laymen. Those with talent in music or in art can be used in a group effort in a presentation. People working together are not only more effective, they can reach a goal faster and more effectively. Working together is summarized in the pooling of our talent, money, and resources toward one common goal.

Synergism does not mean we have to be alike, think alike, or believe the same things. Synergism does mean that we are willing to work side by side, respect one another, and combine our talents and energy.

How does synergism begin? It starts when you as an individual or group volunteer to help another individual or group. Alone we are weak. Together we are strong and can accomplish great things, including sending kids to camp, improving camping facilities, supporting hospitals, working with our neighbours and through these activities, developing our discipleship and spreading the gospel.

(based on material from "*Dear Lord, they want me to give the devotion again*" by Schroeder and Groth

**Discussion** Discuss how synergism has worked successfully in the past.

Share a local goal you believe can be accomplished by working together.

Share a goal which would require working with men in neighbour congregations

Share a goal which could be accomplished with a provincial or even a national effort of men working together.

**Prayer** Let us pray – O God of mercy and tenderness, but God also of strength and vision, we ask your presence with all who seek to understand the changes and newness that surrounds our lives. Give us the humility and understanding that we may work together here and across our wonderful country. We are grateful for those who have been sensitive enough to your leadership to risk disfavour while they followed the conviction they believed were your gifts to them. Keep us open to new ways of dealing with life that more of your people may know the joy of accomplishment and fulfilment. Through Christ we pray. Amen.

**Coming events** See [www.aots.ca](http://www.aots.ca) coming events section

**Book of the month** 'Dear Lord, they want me to give the devotion again'  
by John D. Schroeder & Shane M. Groth