

## United In Christ

Phil. 2:1-4

**Philippians 2:1-4** - Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

### **Introduction:**

A. Paul had just encouraged us to let our “conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ” (1:27).

**Philippians 1:27** - Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

B. In trying to teach us how to live, he tells us that we need to be united in Christ.

### **I. To Fulfill The Purpose Of Christ, We Must Be United (2:1-2).**

A. If we are united we will have the same love and be of one mind.

1. We must have the same love.

a. Our love is not for the things of this world, but rather it is for Christ and the things of God.

1) Our desire is to be pleasing to Him.

2) We must love Christ more than our fellow man - Matt. 10:37

**Matthew 10:37** - "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

3) If we all would do this, we would find great unity.

b. Paul reminds us that there is great comfort in this love (2:1 - “comfort of love”).

2. We must have the same mind.

a. To have the same mind means that we think the same way about the things of God.

1) This does not mean that we cannot have our own opinions about other things.

2) But it does mean that when it comes to the things of God, we must be united in our thoughts.

3) We do this by following the word of God in the things of God.

b. The Bible continuously encourages us to be united in the same mind - Phil. 3:16; Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 1:10

**Philippians 3:16** - however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

**Romans 12:16** - Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

**1 Corinthians 1:10** - Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

B. The only way to be united is to have the mind of Christ.

1. As Paul talks about being united, he reminds us to be like Christ - Phil. 2:5-8

**Philippians 2:5-8** - Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself,

taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

2. Jesus prayed for this unity to be in His disciples - Jn. 17:20-23

**John 17:20-23** - "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.

C. We have an example of this unity in the early church - Acts 1:14; 2:1; 2:46

**Acts 1:14** - These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

**Acts 2:1** - When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

**Acts 2:46** - Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

D. The point is that the early church was united; and because of this unity, it prospered.

## II *To Be United, We Can Do Nothing "Through Selfish Ambition Or Conceit"* (2:3).

A. If we are going to be united, we cannot seek after our own gain.

1. The implication by Paul is that we do not do things that cause strife or division in the Lord's church.

a. In fact, the original word that is used means, "intrigue, i.e. (by implication) faction" (Strong's).

b. The Bible warns us about such an attitude - Jas. 3:14-16

**James 3:14-16** - But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

c. We are told to avoid such people - 2 Tim. 2:23; Tit 3:9-11; Rom. 2:8-9

**2 Timothy 2:23** - But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.

**Titus 3:9-11** - But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. 10 Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, 11 knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

**Romans 2:8-9** - but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek,

2. Far too many times, members of the Lord's body will try and promote themselves over others.

a. Instead of having pure motives, they work so that they can be considered great.

b. If someone else is trying to do something for the church, they will try and destroy it because they do not receive any glory from it.

B. We must esteem others better than ourselves.

1. We must humble ourselves and not think too highly of ourselves - Rom. 12:3; Jas. 4:6, 10

**Romans 12:3** - For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

**James 4:6** - But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

**James 4:10** - Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

2. We must esteem others better than ourselves.
  - a. To be united, think of others as being better than ourselves - Rom. 12:10; Matt. 7:12; 22:39; Rom. 15:2

**Romans 12:10** - Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;

**Matthew 7:12** - "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

**Matthew 22:39** - "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

**Romans 15:2** - Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification.

- b. We must look to the good qualities that others have.
- c. This would solve most problems in the church.
3. Again, notice the example of Christ.
  - a. Jesus put the needs of others ahead of His own needs and desires.
  - b. Jesus shows us what it is like to humble ourselves before God.

### III. *To Be United, We Must Look Out "For The Interests Of Others"* (2:4).

A. There are times when we must look out for our own interests.

1. We, as individuals, are responsible for our own actions.
  - a. We are going to be judged according to our own actions.
  - b. Therefore, we must make sure that we are being faithful to God.
2. Jesus teaches us that we must look out for our own interests - Matt. 7:3-5

**Matthew 7:3-5** - "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

3. Paul also tells us to look out for ourselves - 2 Cor. 13:5

**2 Corinthians 13:5** - Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you--unless indeed you fail the test?

B. To truly be united, we must also look out "for the interests of others."

1. Because we are seeking the same goal and reward, we must be willing to look out for the best in others.
2. This applies to all aspects of our lives - Galatians 6:1 NAS95 1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

**James 5:19-20** - My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

**1 Corinthians 10:24** - Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor.

**Hebrews 10:24** - and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

**1 Corinthians 13:5** - does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,

Conclusion: