

14/02/10 (pm) - Series on Philippians - Sermon 15

**Behave Yourself ...  
Foster Unity through  
Mutual Care**

**Phil. 2:1-4**

*Theme: Christians must foster  
unity through mutual care.*

***Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ. (1:27a)***

Paul has just shown what this means for Christians facing opposition from without (1:27b-30).

Now he applies it to disunity from within (2:1-11).

# A Problem at Philippi

Two Christian ladies could not agree, *cf.* 2:14; 4:2.

Unresolved difficulties between individuals may grow as family and friends take sides and a party spirit develops.

Paul's two main points:

- the foundations for mutual care already exist (2:1);
- the Philippian Christians must foster mutual care among themselves (2:2-4).

*Mutual care among Christians is the key to avoiding disunity.*

## A. Existing Foundations for Mutual Care (2:1)

*'If' means 'since'.*

These were supernatural realities that had already occurred in their lives, just as they have occurred in **every** true Christian's life.

**What were they?**

- 1. Comfort from being in [united with] Christ** - *an intimate, vital and spiritual union with Christ where He was the Source of their life, strength, blessedness, salvation.*
- 2. Comfort from Jesus' love** - *knowledge that Jesus loved them unconditionally and gave Himself for them.*

**3. Fellowship with the Spirit - a common sharing in the Spirit: they were indwelt by the Spirit and aware of His activity.**

**4. Tenderness and compassion - of Christ.**

This is the supernatural work of Christ in *all* Christians at salvation.

So... unity among Christians is natural...

... and therefore disunity is unnatural.

## **B. Fostering Mutual Care (2:2-4)**

He says, *If you have these things, and I know you have, then ... make my joy complete!* – a command.

### **How?**

Unity will not happen *in practice* automatically. It must be worked at.  
Paul gives guidelines.

## Generally, be like-minded (2:2).

- **Be like-minded** - *be Gospel oriented, have the same mind-set & seek the same goal;*
- **have the same love** - *for each other as Christ has for you;*
- **be one in spirit** (*be harmonious*) **and mind** (*repetition for emphasis*).

## Specifically:

**1. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit (2:3a).**

= self-interest at the expense of others or seeking self-glory.

Christians must guard against being driven by these.

**How?** ⇒

## **2. Humbly consider others better than yourself (2:3b).**

Don't be filled with self-importance; realise what you are before God—a sinner saved by grace.

**How does a Christian do this? ⇒**

**3. Look to [pay careful attention to] others' interests as well as your own (2:4).**

# Conclusion—Guard Against Disunity!

There will always be a tendency to disunity among Christians because:

- **we** are not perfect;
- the **Devil** seeks to cause disunity in fellowships;
- the **world** boasts a *me culture*.

*Realise that unity is already ours  
because of our union with Christ  
(2:1),  
and then practise mutual care for  
each other in the way Scripture  
directs (2:3-4).*