

SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians

Philippians 4:1-3 – “The Disaster of Division”

Philippians 4:1-3, *“Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.”*

Psalms 133:1-3, *“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.”*

Notice the blessings of unity among believers.

But the sad reality is that the saints of God don't always *dwell together in unity!*

In Philippians 4:1-3, Paul is dealing with the disaster of division.

Every church deals with this problem.

Notice the problem: *“I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.”* (vs. 2)

1. What we know:

- they were women
- they were believers
- they were members of the church at Philippi
- they had labored with Paul in the gospel

2. What we don't know:

- what they were divided over
- it doesn't seem to be doctrinal
- its more likely a personal preference

The work of Satan is to divide!

Reasons division is dangerous

1. Division is dangerous because it is contrary to the apostle's mind (vs. 1)

Philippians 4:1, "*Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.*"

Notice Paul's attitude towards the believer's in Philippi:

- A. *my brethren* – Paul was their spiritual father, and yet they were also his brothers [Paul was a Jew, they were Gentiles]

How?

By being born again into the family of God.

- B. *dearly beloved* – Notice it occurs twice in verse one.

1 Thessalonians 4:9-10, "*But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but webeseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;*"

- C. *longed for* – Notice Philippians 1:8

Philippians 1:8, "*For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.*"

He didn't want their money, he wanted them!

Paul's inner emotion

It's the same word used in Philippians 2:26, for Epaphroditus.

Do you long for the believers?

- D. *my joy* – Paul found joy in people

Why?

The humble mind of Christ (Philippians 2:1-4)

- E. *my crown* – its not *diadem* but *stephanos* ('the victor's crown' a laurel wreath)

Today's gold medals consist of silver covered with about 6 grams of 24-karat gold with inlayed with Jade (It's not all pure gold).

Remember: Love is the mark of the Christian.

John 13:34-35 (New Living Translation) *"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."*

1 John 4:7-8, *"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."*

2. Division is disastrous because it is contrary to the nature of the church. (vs. 3)

Philippians 4:3, *"And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life."*

Paul is calling on fellow Christians to help bring reconciliation and unity between these two women.

And in Paul's words we see what the church would be like were it true to its nature and calling.

- A. The church should be marked by a mutual helpfulness (vs. 3)

help – literally: 'take hold along with'

Galatians 6:1-3 (New Living Translation), *"Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. 3 If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important."*

The church should be marked by mutual helpfulness.

Barnabus helped Saul.

- B. The church possess a single task

laboured with me in the gospel (vs. 3)

Our job is to get out the gospel.

C. The church is a place of fundamental oneness (vs. 3)

whose names are in the book of life (vs. 3)

There is a heavenly reality about the church.

Luke 10:20 – Rejoice

Revelation 3:5 – Church at Sardis

Revelation 20 – Great White Throne

Three ways to maintain unity:

1. *stand fast in the Lord* (vs. 1) “*in the Lord*”
2. *be of the same mind* (vs. 2) “*in the Lord*”
3. Serve the Lord together (vs. 3) be “*fellowlabourers*”

Lehman Strauss – The important thing to get hold of is the apostle’s appeal to others in the church to cooperate in bringing to pass a reconciliation of Euodias and Syntyche. These two women needed help in restoring harmony. It is very often through the wise direction of some Spirit-filled man of God that dislocated saints are restored to fellowship with God and to usefulness in His service. It is our business to safeguard our Lord’s interests by not allowing differences between brethren to deepen into strife and separation. The churches need more yokefellows, Christians who pull well in a double harness.