Being Right Minded

toward your brothers & sisters in Christ

Philippians 2:1-4

1-8-2025

Because of what God has done for us, this should motivate us to see our obligation to each other.

- **YOU MUST FULFILL YOUR OBLIGATIONS TOWARD OTHER BELIEVERS IN THIS CHURCH.**

How? By obeying two obligations involving right thinking.

I. WE MUST BE "LIKE MINDED" (v. 2) (Unity)

A. BY HAVING ONE LOVE (FOR GOD).

B. BY HAVING ONE BOND (GLUED TOGETHER).

C. BY HAVING ONE PURPOSE (ONE GOAL).

II. WE MUST BE "LOWLY MINDED" (V. 3 - 4) (HUMILITY)

A. SELFISH THINKING MUST GO (v. 3a)

1. Do nothing for self-gain ("strife")

2. Do nothing for self-glory ("vain glory")

B. SELFLESS THINKING MUST GROW (v. 3b - 4)

1. By looking up at others (v. 3b)

2. By looking out for others (v. 4)

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INTRO: Previous context: Living like a citizen of heaven (l:27-30) involved a stand for unity in the midst of external adversaries. Now in 2:1-4, God exhorts us to maintain an inner harmony in the fellowship.

V. 1 The four Greek conjunctions (if) introduce what grammarians call: "First Class Conditional Phrases" These phrases assume that the condition is true and factual. Because Paul is talking to Christians, when he says "if" he expects a positive answer. It could be read: *"Since there is . .."*

"Consolation" = lit. to "call alongside" - encouragement and comfort

"Comfort" = lit. to "speak softly along side", to cheer up; to speak tenderly (Illus. of a mother reading to her children)

"Fellowship"= sharing, communion (a oneness)
"Fellowship of the Spirit" = the Holy Spirit unites us together in one body (I Cor. 12:

"Bowels"= inner emotional heart.
The seat of feelings; tender affection

"Mercies" = the outworking of tender feelings

See II Cor. 13:14 for similar arrangement of blessings from all three persons of the Godhead.

Christ's encouragement,
The Father's love,
The Spirit's fellowship . . .
along with compassion and mercy -
ought to motivate you to fulfill your obligation to other believers!

You are obligated if you are included in the list.
Because of what God has done for us, this should motivate us to see our obligation to each other.
Ex. Paul said, "I am debtor" (Rom. l:l4)

- **YOU MUST <u>FULFILL</u> YOUR <u>OBLIGATIONS</u> TOWARD OTHER BELIEVERS IN THIS CHURCH.**

How? By obeying two obligations involving right thinking.

I. WE MUST BE "LIKE MINDED" (v. 2) (Unity)

When Epaphroditus brought a generous gift from Philippi, and good news of the church's concern for Paul, this no doubt brought joy to Paul. However, he also brought bad news of a possible division in the church family (cp. 4:1-2).

"Fulfill ye my joy" = fill up my joy. We too often are satisfied with less than giving God everything! We do things halfway. We need to go the extra mile.

"Like minded" - to think the same thing; to be compelled by the same aims and objectives.

Romans 12:16 - "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

Positionally we all are <u>one</u> in Christ.

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another" (Rom. 12:5).

So practically we should live like it!

These words were found on a grave stone of a man and his wife: "We <u>spoke</u> the same things, we <u>thought</u> the same things, and we go the inseparable way in Hades" (Lohmeyer; BS, 256).

A. BY HAVING <u>ONE LOVE</u> (FOR GOD).

"Same love" = the <u>love of God</u> in all

"Same love" = Each believer is to share the same agape love for God. The LORD is to be the believer's # 1 love (cp. Mark 12:30). Such love for God is to be shared by everyone in the Church. The major reason why the Church assembles is to provoke each other unto this love for God (Heb.10:24-25). No other "loves" should get in the way of this one!

I Jn. 2:15 - ". . . if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

B. BY HAVING <u>ONE BOND</u> (GLUED TOGETHER).

"Unity": See - Acts 4:32; Rom. 12:12; I Cor. l:10 10:17; II Cor. 13:11; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 4:3, 13.

"One accord" = lit. to be "one souled;" "to be together in soul;" (i.e. to be harmonious; to have our hearts beat as one; to be united in spirit)
"Unity": See - Acts 4:32; Rom. 12:12; I Cor. l:10, 10:17; II Cor. 13:11; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 4:3, 13.

Unity is <u>not</u> uniformity:

--Unity comes by God's changing a man internally, in the heart.

--Uniformity comes by man's forcing others to externally conform to a legalistic standard.

C. BY HAVING <u>ONE PURPOSE</u> (ONE GOAL).

"One mind" - one purpose; rallying around a common goal.``When everyone becomes preoccupied with a <u>single</u> goal -- you have unity!

Ex. of how people can all rally together during a catastrophe (ex. flood, storm, hurricane, etc.) and pull together toward a common goal.

Ex. of a sports team with <u>one</u> objective.

II. WE MUST BE "LOWLY MINDED" (V. 3 - 4) (HUMILITY)

A. SELFISH THINKING MUST GO (v. 3a)

1. Do nothing for self-gain ("strife")

"strife" = "selfish ambition" - its related noun form originally meant "a day laborer." It referred to the attitude of those who worked for wages and particularly it denoted a self-seeking pursuit of political office by unfair means. It refers to the ambition which has no conception of service and whose only aims are profit and power.

2. Do nothing for self-glory ("vain glory")

"Vain glory" = empty praise

Illus. of Herod Agrippa who took the glory (Acts 12:21-23).

Gal. 5:25-26 - "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

Applic. Don't let your own personal self-interests divide this body.

B. SELFLESS THINKING MUST GROW (v. 3b - 4)

"Humility is that grace that, when you know you have it, you have lost it."

"Always ask God for humility, but never thank Him for it."

The Greeks were "high-minded" people. To tell a Greek to have "lowliness of mind" was to insult them. However, salvation changed this way of thinking.

Lowliness of mind is not natural, but God tells us it is possible and His Son is our example -

Matthew ll:29 - "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."
SELFLESS THINKING MUST GROW!
HOW?

1. By looking up at others (v. 3b)

"Esteem" = to mentally consider. "The word implies a conscious, sure judgment resting on a careful weighing of the facts" (Vincent).

We look down on others when we have/do something that they do not have or do.

We think we are standing
1) we go soulwinning and they don't
2) we are faithful to church and they are not

"Esteem others better" = considering others as having some things over you.

--We are encouraged to recognize the strong points of our fellow brother that might excel some of our own capabilities. Others can do some things better than you. Give them proper honor and encouragement in this using of their God-given gifts.

--This does not mean that we should practice false humility and put ourselves down.

--There can be no joy in the life of the Christian who puts himself above others.

--Sinful human nature tries to outdo others. This causes tension, jealousy, envy, hatred, etc.

"Esteeming others better" than yourself removes pressure and friction. Restores joy.

This attitude is one of submissiveness. (Eph. 5:21 says that we are to be "submitting to one another in the fear of Christ").

In chap. 1, the stress was on "Christ first". Now it is on "others next".

J - Jesus
O - Others

Y - You

2. By looking out for others (v. 4)

Just as "looking up at others" ("esteeming others better") is the opposite of "vain glory" (v. 3), now in verse 4, "looking out for others" is the opposite of "strife" (v. 3).

"Look" = Gk. " scope" - to fix our attention.

"Look at" = Being humble is not accomplished by looking at the faults in others and the good things (virtues) in our lives -

But it is by having a goal in life to look for the virtue in the lives of others (cp. 4:8).

Rom. 15:1-3 - "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

Gal. 6:1 - "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself also, lest thou also be tempted."

Illus. in marriage: You & Me become "WE"
It is no longer my ___ and my ___
It is "our ____"

Cp. Phil. 2:19-22 - Timothy's looking out for others.

V. 22 - "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's"

I Cor. 10:24 in a context of refraining from practices (eating meat sacrificed to idols) that might cause others to stumble, Paul said: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth (welfare)."

CONCL:

Are you fulfilling your obligations toward other believers in this church?

You can, by thinking right!

We must be "like minded" (have unity)
We must be "lowly minded" (have humility)