

CHRISTIAN UNITY & HARMONY

Paul enjoyed a mutually gratifying relationship with the great church at Philippi. They eagerly shared in the ministry of spreading the gospel through their own efforts & they also gave to him financially as they were able (Phi 1:3-5 fellowship in the gospel). As great as the church was, like every other church, they struggled with fights & quarrels that turned into deep divisions. God allowed circumstances in the life of two women to become a personal conflict that grew into a division in the church. One of the themes of the letter to the Philippians is Unity & Harmony. Unity = structural; Harmony = functional

Eph 4:1-6 Christian Unity

Walk Worthy of Calling

Eph 4:1

- beseech you - **parakaleo** – beseech, urge, entreat, implore, beg – I am begging you
- walk worthy - **parapateo axios** – order your daily life in a manner equal to your calling in Christ
- calling with which you were called – great emphasis on God’s calling us into His kingdom
 - emphasizing the God side of the salvation experience

Eph 4:2

- humility – **tapeinophrosune** – soul surrendered to God; meekness – **praus** – outward expression
 - Humility of mind is belief about self that is surrendered to the will of God to learn & obey
 - Outward expression is seen in gentleness, nurturing, respect, edifying – giving unconditional
- patience – **makrothumia** – patience with people – refuse to retaliate when suffering a wrong
- forbearance – **anochē** – to endure irritating or hurtful behavior without striking out
- one another in love – Unconditional love being the mind-set committed to edify another in any/every way, to whatever degree allowed, using every Christian virtue supplied by the Spirit
 - These Christian virtues are available only to the growing, maturing believer

Eph 4:3

- eager – **spoudazo** PAPTc – being determined, diligent, disciplined

1. Passages:

1Cor 12:12-13 – one body, many members; GHS baptizes us into body of Christ

- Christ is the head; believers are individual members of the one body
- B\GHS places us all into union with Christ – structural unity based on position in Christ

1Co 6:15-19 – body of believer is members of Christ & indwelt by GHS

- structural unity based on indwelling of GHS – **naos** of God
- Baptized into body of Christ & indwelt to form the living sanctuary of God-head

1Pt 2:5,9 – living stones in temple of God; Royal priesthood to serve in the temple

John 17:20-23 – that they all might be one (united together); just as Jesus & GF are one; glory given to them that they might be one just as we are one; I in them, you in me; so that they might be totally united into one – that the world may believe that you sent me

- Christian unity is the sign God gives the world to know that Christ is real
- Christian unity in spite of differences is accomplished by supernatural work of GHS & the word
- The indwelling of the God-head in the believer’s body is the basis for unity & harmony

Eph 4:1-6 – walk worthy of your calling; humility of mind & expression; patience, forbearance, in love; determined to keep the unity of the Spirit in bond of peace; one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one baptism, one GF of all, over all, through all and in all.

- Walk in a manner equal in value to the calling with which you have been called
- Guard/keep the unity of GHS formed from the bond of peace
- Focus on our oneness with God-head & one another in Christ, not our differences.

2. God structures the body of Christ into oneness, to promote mutuality & service to one another.

- We are in Christ & GHS is in us – divine blood runs through our veins joining us together
- 1Pt 2:5 living stones built together into a holy building connected by the cornerstone (Christ)
- 1Cor 12 – Sp. Gifts in the body of Christ to meet the needs of the universal & local church
- Structural assignment of gift duplications in churches to be prepared for needs of believers.

3. Structural unity enables practical unity (harmony) - evidence to world that Christ is real

Jn 17:21-23 – perfected into oneness that the world may know that you sent me & loved them just as you also loved me

Jn 13:34-35 – love one another, by your love for one another all men will know you are my disciples

4. Far more biblical emphasis placed on unity than on separating over doctrine or behavior, but there are times and reasons to separate - believers teaching heresy; influence toward immorality

1Cor 11:19 – factions, clichés – **haireisis** – divisions, sects, groups holding different ideas & customs

Act 5:17 – the sects of Sadducees cp Pharisees; 2Pt 2:1 destructive heresies;

Act 24:5 – dissension – **stasis** – to take an opposing position from the church

Act 15:1-2_false gospel – believe in Christ & be circumcised – Paul & Barnabas were in great dissension (**stasis**) against these believers and this teaching; Called for Jerusalem Conference to determine if separation was necessary

Act 20:28-30 – grievous wolves come in and drag the sheep off from the flock after them

1Cor 5 – public immorality celebrated among the congregation – step-mother

- There is an appropriate time to separate from believers teaching heresy 1Tim 1:20
- 1Tim 4:1 – doctrines of demons must be put out of the church – forbidding to marry
- 2Cor 11:12-15 – false teachers disguising selves as apostles of Christ – Satanic demons
- Immoral behavior that becomes known in public & influences others to follow suit

5. God assigns each believer a local church – based on will/God, not personal preference

1Cor 12:18 – GHS places the members of the church in the body as He so desires – assignment GHS

- Imagine if every believer listened to GHS about the church He had assigned them
- Imagine if a large group of believers accepted their assignment & fulfilled their mission

6. Philippians 1:27 – Paul explains his desire to go to heaven but his need to stay so that this church continue to grow.

Whatever happens; either way; if I go or if I stay - harmony

Phil.1:27

- **worthy – axios** = to be equal in weight or value – **of the gospel of Christ**
- **conduct self – politeuomai** – to conduct self as a citizen; behave in agreement with citizenship
 - In 1st century, citizenship was an important aspect of life – part of identity – Saul of Tarsus
 - Paul & Silas has a conflict with city officials in Philippi so they used their Roman citizenship

Act 16:35-39 – Philippian officials are afraid when they realize that Paul & Silas are Romans

Act 22:25-29 – Roman soldiers are afraid when they hear Paul is a Roman – almost had scourged him

- City of Philippi was a retirement city for Roman soldiers – many had begun as slaves & earned Roman citizenship through military service.
- When Paul uses the word politeuma, every one of these folks knows what he is saying Heavenly citizenship Eph 2:19 fellow citizens with all saints; Phi 1:27 conduct yourself as a citizen
- Conduct yourself in a manner worthy of who you are in Christ & as a citizen of heaven.

Phil.1:27

- if I come face/face or remain absent, I will hear about you, that you are
- standing firm – **steko** – to stand firm; resist being moved; Rom 14:4 Lord can make us stand; 1Cor 16:13 – stand firm in the faith; Gal5:1 in your freedom; Phi 4:1 – in the Lord
 - stand firm against that which would move you from unity, faith, freedom, the Lord.
- in one spirit – **pneuma** – message, idea – one way of thinking about the Christian life
- one soul – **psuche** – joined together at the level of the soul, the mind & heart
 - deeper connection than just an overt allegiance, joining souls together into a oneness
- striving together – **sunathleo** – play athletics on same team – CWL is a team sport
 - The multifold ministry of the church is a team effort requiring all the different positions on the team to be filled by mature gifted believers seeking the same goal – to edify man & glorify God