

Be United!

Introduction

- Drawing ideas from the book of Philippians
- Epistle speaks to responsibilities among Christians
 - Much is written about unity
- Philippians 2:1-2
 - 4 ways of saying, "Have unity!"
 - Be like-minded
 - Have the same love
 - Be of one accord
 - Be of one mind
- Problem in Philippi...

Introduction

Philippians 2:1–2

1 Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.

Introduction

Philippians 4:2–3

2 I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in the Book of Life.

Importance of Unity...

- Unity emphasized throughout the New Testament
- Unity was important to Jesus
 - John 17:6-26
- Unity is possible!
 - Unity in Diversity?
 - Pseudo Unity?
 - True Unity!

Importance of Unity...

Philippians 1:27

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,

Importance of Unity...

Ephesians 4:1–3

1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Nature of Unity...

- General sense
 - Similar to “fellowship”
 - 1 John 1:1-7
 - Based in the truth of the gospel
 - Different than “fellowship”
 - Sometimes unity can be fractured, but fellowship can still exist
 - Sometimes unity can exist without true, biblical fellowship
 - Ideally: biblical unity and biblical fellowship cover the same territory!

Nature of Unity...

- Local sense
 - Practice of unity!
- God has provided what we need for unity
 - Ephesians 4:11-16
 - Function:
 - Bring us all to the unity of the faith
 - Bring us all to the knowledge of the Son of God

Nature of Unity...

Ephesians 4:3

3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Nature of Unity...

- Local unity comprised of:
 - Unity of mind
 - Philippians 2:1-2
 - Unity of love
 - Matthew 22:36-40
 - Unity of work
 - Functioning of body
 - Romans 12:3-8

Nature of Unity...

There is no clear distinction between the first (“be likeminded”) and the fourth (“of one mind”) phrases... Literally the words ***of one accord*** (sumpsuchioi) mean “of one soul,” or “joined in soul,” while ***of one mind*** means “thinking the one thing.” Together the two statements mean “joined in soul contemplating the one thing.”

Walton Weaver, Commentary on Philippians

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Where Lack of Unity Leads...

- Destructive!
 - Division of groups
 - Denominationalism
- Unity fractured over something other than truth
 - Judgment? Opinion?
 - Sometimes breaking unity or fellowship is necessary
 - Unity should only be fractured when **ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY!**

Difficulties in Unity...

- Sometimes, implementing principles that bring unity can be difficult
 - Issues we may disagree on?
 - “Drawing lines of fellowship”?
 - Unity results from the maturing of the body

Difficulties in Unity...

Philippians 3:15–16

15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. 16 Nevertheless, to *the degree* that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

Conclusion...

- Focus on unity in the local body
- Importance of unity!
 - Jesus expects His people to diligently work toward unity
 - Never take it for granted, or treat it flippantly!

Conclusion...

Ephesians 4:3

3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.