

**>>>>>>   *Philippians - Lesson 03*   <<<<<<<**

- 1) Moving on to chapter 2, we will see that virtually the entire chapter is about being like Christ.
  - a) His humility, obedience, His life as the beloved Son of God and most importantly, what that should mean to us and our reaction should be to that life.

***Philippians 2:1–2 (NASB 2020)***

***Be like Christ***

<sup>1</sup> Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, <sup>2</sup> make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

- 2) I think it is important to see the key to this introductory paragraph as the particle “*if*.”
  - a) In these statements, Paul is using a technique which in essence sets the user up to give an expected answer for themselves.
  - b) These clauses could have been easily written:
    - i) Since there is encouragement in Christ
    - ii) Since there is consolation of love
    - iii) Since there is fellowship of the Spirit
    - iv) Since there is affection and compassion
  - c) In that case, the answers are given – no thought is required.
  - d) However, by making them in the form of “*if clauses*”, it forces the reader to mentally conclude the positive answer for themselves, not stating it for them.
  - e) Paul’s goal was not to make us question these things.
  - f) It was instead to remind us that they are present so we mentally convert them to...
    - i) There ***is*** encouragement in Christ
    - ii) There ***is*** consolation of love
    - iii) There ***is*** fellowship of the Spirit
    - iv) There ***is*** affection and compassion
  - g) Those positive conclusions are key to the completion of the statement in verse 2 ff where there is an unstated “*then*”
  - h) Paul leaves us no choice – (*then*) ***BE LIKE MINDED! AGREE!***
  - i) Before we do that, let’s do our “do diligence” – let’s talk about each one of these ideas for just a moment and make sure we first understand them and then agree.

***Encouragement in Christ – seems simple enough, somebody put a definition to it?***

***What about consolation of love? (consolation - the comfort received by a person after a loss or disappointment)***

***And fellowship of the Spirit?***

***Finally, affection and compassion?***

3) Eugene Peterson's "the Message" does a really good job of summarizing what we have just been talking about.

***Philippians 2:1–2 (MSG)***

2 If you've gotten anything at all out of following Christ, if his love has made any difference in your life, if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to you, if you have a heart, if you *care*—then do me a favor: Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends.

4) So, reading on, we see what Paul's ideas are to be like Christ, beginning with what it totally means to agree with all these points.

***Philippians 2:2–4 (NASB 2020)***

<sup>2</sup> make my joy complete

5) This is an imperative, a commandment.

6) How Paul?

7) What follows is a string of descriptions (participles).

by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves; <sup>4</sup> do not *merely* look out for your own personal *interests*, but also for the *interests* of others.

8) The primary item in this list is *being of the same mind*.

a) Everything else simply goes to the completion of that.

i) being of Same love.

ii) being United in spirit.

iii) being of One purpose.

iv) being Not conceited and self centered.

(1) I have wondered about the phrase "empty conceit" used here. Turns out it is a single Greek word (*kenodoxia*) used only here in the entire New Testament.

(2) It means according to BDAG – a vain or exaggerated self-evaluation, vanity, conceit, excessive ambition.

(a) Note, BDAG stands for Baur, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich. This is the best Greek lexicon we have today. Saying BDAG is to Greek as saying Webster is to English.

v) Considering others more important than ourselves.

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- vi) Looking out for the interests of others.
- 9) As we said in the introduction, though this is a very personal letter and Paul does keep it positive and upbeat throughout, there are still issues he must deal with.
- 10) These are ideas which anyone wanting to be like Jesus would need to take into their lives and live out each day.
- 11) Here he is dealing gently with some amount of disunity and perhaps divisive rivalry.
- 12) It is likely **not** pervasive in the church but as we will see in chapter 4:2, there are at least a couple of folks who need these thoughts directly.

### ***Philippians 4:2 (NASB 2020)***

<sup>2</sup> I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord.

- 13) Looking at the list again,

***Though related, there are two major themes in this list – see if you can pick out what they are?***

- i) Same love.
  - ii) United in spirit.
  - iii) One purpose.
  - iv) Not conceited and self centered.
  - v) Considering others more important than ourselves.
  - vi) Looking out for the interests of others.
- 14) Unity and Selflessness.

***What do you think would be the most important **individual** item in the list?***

***Why?***

***What would be the least important **individual** item in the list?***

***Why?***

***If you want to share, which item gives you personally the most trouble?***

- 15) We said earlier that we would see more of what it meant when Paul said:

<sup>21</sup> For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

- 16) As we discussed this statement “For to me, to live is Christ...” we concluded that perhaps what that meant was our “being consumed” by His concerns, values, and mission.

***Is there any part of Paul’s list that does not fit into Christ’s concerns, values, or mission?***

***Is this all encompassing? (to say it another way, If we get this right, are we good to go?)***

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- 17) Not really, this is really the horizontal components of Christianity – us to our fellowman.
- 18) It is vital and important however that we also remember the vertical component – us to God our creator.
- 19) It perhaps all comes down to WHY we do all these things.
- 20) We can be the nicest person in the world but if we do not have a relationship with God and Christ as we should, we are just that – a nice person – nothing more!