Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church Bible Study

Text: Philippians 4:1-3

Series: Preserving The Gospel by Building Relationships

Sub Title: Are You A Plus In The Kingdom, But A Minus in The Congregation?

Introduction

* We noted in our last lesson how it is that God as Trinity reflects practice of Differentiated-Unity.
* Gods Mission is carried out through Differentiated Unity.
* Operating in Differentiated-Unity becomes the objective of those who make up the Church.
* It is the promotion of Togetherness that is scriptural expressed, and promote it reveals how we are to interact, and relate to one another in the Body of Christ.
* This week we will explore Unity from the book of Philippians.
  + Philippians is a Thank-you note from Paul, to the believers at Philippi for their help in his time of need.
  + In this letter to Paul decides to include instructions for acquiring and maintaining Christian Unity, that includes a **oneness of purpos**e, **attitude**, **goal**, and **labor**.
* This Christian Unity can only be obtained through Christ, and when challenged or threatened, Reclaiming Unity is a must for believers success, Christian Advancement, and exercising The Ministry of Reconciliation.
* As Christians we are to be “Protectors of the process of staying in unity”, and our greatest effort of such comes when we **ground** **our** **efforts** through Fellowship In The Gospel, Confirmation Of The Gospel, Furtherance Of The Gospel, Defense Of The Gospel, and displaying Conduct Worthy Of The Gospel.

Paul in Philippians 1:27 culminates these actions combined as “Standing for the Faith Of The Gospel”.

* ***Sometimes the stand, is against contentions.***
  + Contentions are “assertions maintained in argument”.
  + Contentions are struggle, or dispute arguments.
  + Another word for Contention is “***discord”.***
* ***Contentions can be relationship killers, because they destroy unity.***

Paul in Chapter 4, teaches us how we are to respond to contentious situations, as Christians.

**Let’s Read Philippians 4:1-3**

“Therefore, **my beloved and longed-for brethren**, **my joy and crown**, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

I implore **Euodia** and I implore **Syntyche** to be of the same mind in the Lord.

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.

* In verse 1 Paul employs the use of **Personal Affection**.
  + This is in direct relation to Paul having situated himself, and others in the fellowship of Gospel in Christ Jesus. ***There should be genuine affection for one another in the body of Christ.*** 
    - That’s why you should not be apart of church where you don’t feel welcomed and wanted.
    - Its also why churches should do all they can to breakdown the “my-church” complex that some have in the church.
* In verse 1 Paul also employs the use of **Personal Affirmation.**
  + Here Paul taps into the relatedness and relativity we learned about in the previous lesson. Here Paul lets them know what they mean to him.
    - They are His Joy. This speaks to how serving them makes him feel.
    - They are His Crown. This speaks to how it is that Paul understands that his relatedness to them, is connected to his purpose from God.
    - Their success, Is His Success!
* Paul success, the success of His Godly Assignment, and the success of the Work of The Kingdom are all interrelated. So Paul speaks into the situation of discord the words “So Stand Fast in the Lord, beloved”.
  + - Pauls passionate intention with this statement is revealed in his letter to the church at Corinth.
    - **Let’s Read: 1Corinthians 1:10,**
    - and again in **Ephesians 4:1-3,Le t’s Read It.**
    - Pauls statement to “Stand Fast”, is a recall to conduct and character becoming of Christ.
* In verse 2 we discover that it is not only a call to Stand Fast, but it is also a call to Stand Against. Paul renders a **Powerful Admonition.**
  + - Paul shows here that contentions can not go unaddressed. Not even in the congregation, because it threatens the unity.
    - Two possible causes for discord or contention is hinted at in this verse with the names Eudoia and Syntyche.
      * Eudoia are both woman in the congregation. Some say a minister, others say a deaconess, however the important factor can be found in the meanings of their names.
        + Eudoia =“Prosperous or Good Journey”
        + Syntyche =“Fortunate with Fate”
      * The discord is between the making of a way good, and good just happening.
    - Paul says that the contention is to be settled by the two persons adopting the “same mind in the Lord”.
    - Paul begs them to do so, as indicated by the word “implore”.

Paul does not stop with begging the two, he subsequently declares that the Christian who is “true companion”, or “true yokefellow”. (Suzugos = Friend) should help them with having the same mind in the Lord.

Note there position in verse 3.

They labor with Paul and others in the Gospel.

* They are in Fellowship In The Gospel, Confirmation Of The Gospel, Furtherance Of The Gospel, Defense Of The Gospel, ***but are not displaying Conduct Worthy Of The Gospel.***
* Their contention is causing division.

Their names are in the Book of Life.

* Exodus 32:32-33, Psalm 69:28, Revelation 3:5
  + They have been saved from their sins, but keep up contentions.
  + They are in the Kingdom, but not as a Plus, but as a Minus.
    - They are not building relationship fruitful for Kingdom Advancement, but are destroying the Kingdom through divisive contentions.

The ultimate question of tonight’s lesson, and for your consideration for the next few weeks, as you prepare for a new season of faith is Will You Refuse To Be A Minus In The Kingdom by helping those who have contentions over the things of God to get past them, or will you be a minus and just let the contentions be.

The Kingdom Advancing depends on your choice.