



# Grace Life Church *of Dallas*

The doctrines of grace, the life of the Spirit, to the glory of God

## Colossians 1:15-18

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, **so that in everything he might have the supremacy.**



## **Ezra James McGaw**

**Ezra 7:10** "For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel. “

**James 1:12** “Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love Him.”



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# **Philippians 4:1-3**

## **Standing Firm Through Unity**

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# Philippians 4:1-3

*Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved. 2 I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. 3 Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.*

# *I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord.*

Our spiritual stability (*standing firm in the Lord*) is greatly impacted by our relationships in the church

- This can be a positive or negative impact
- A division in the church body has devastating effects on the spiritual stability of the individuals involved AND the whole church body
  - **1 Corinthians 12:12** *For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.*
- There is a lot to learn about our relationships and conflicts from these two verses

There is a conflict between two people in the church *Euodia* and *Syntyche*

- The fact that Paul takes the time to address the conflict shows us the seriousness of conflict to the whole church
- We know there is conflict, because Paul calls them to “*agree in the Lord*”

# *I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord.*

## **Who are Euodia and Synteche?**

- They are women (v5) “*help these women*”
- They have labored side by side with Paul in the gospel (v5)
- They are true Christians “*whose names are written in the book of life*”

## **They are women (v5) “*help these women*”**

- We know they are not leaders in the church
  - Relationships between leaders & non-leaders do impact the whole church
    - “It really doesn’t matter if we get along or not, it won’t impact the church”
  - Do not minimize the conflicts you have because you are not a leader

# *I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord.*

## **Who are Euodia and Synteche?**

**They have labored side by side with Paul in the gospel (v5)**

- This reference seems to point back to the start of the church (Acts 16)
  - They are not immature believers
  - The danger of conflict impacts new believers and mature believers
  - **1 Corinthians 10:12** *Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.*
- These are not idle sisters in the church
  - If you are being used by the Lord in one area of the church (ministry) but failing in regards to relationships (conflict), you are not as mature as you may believe

**They are true Christians “*names are written in the book of life*”**

- Conflict will arise between true Christians
- The question is “How will we handle it? (**1 Corinthians 11:18-19**)<sub>7</sub>

# *I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord.*

## **Paul is entreating them to “agree in the Lord”**

- Paul is entreating them (begging them) please “*agree in the Lord*”
- We do not know what their conflict was about
  - It does not appear to be over a gospel doctrinal difference
  - I would imagine most of our conflict in the church will come over Biblical disagreements

## **How do you handle conflict?**

- Even in the midst of our disagreements, differences and preferences we must love
- When we do **not** handle conflict/disagreement Biblically it is because of pride and selfishness (Even if it starts with doctrine, & even when we are right doctrinally)
- **James 4:1** *What cause quarrels and what causes fight among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.”*
- We need to remember that we are all different in our maturity, understanding, and growth, but we **MUST** remain united for God’s glory & spiritual stability



# Conflict in the Church

## How did Paul find out about this conflict?

- Epaphroditus (2:25)

Why is this important? Is there something to be learned here?

- It give us some indication of how long this issue has gone on unresolved
- We can learn from this that we need to deal with issues of disagreement and conflict quickly (and not allow them to fester and spread)

## Scripture always puts the responsibility on you to resolve conflict

- **Matthew 18:15** *If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother*
- **Matthew 5:23-24** *So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.*
- **Romans 12:8** *If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all*
- When our relationships are gospel centered, we can humble ourselves (even when we are in the right) & strive for unity for His glory & spiritual stability

# Conflict in the Church

**What role does the church play in resolving conflict?**

*V3 Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women*

- **YLT** *I ask also thee, genuine yoke-fellow, be assisting those women*
- There is disagreement as to who Paul is referring to here to help (singular)
  - Some believe he is referring to a leader in the church
  - Others believe he is referencing the whole body collectively as one
- What we can discern is that he is asking for someone who is bonded together/labors together with these ladies to help (seize, take) them
  - **Galatians 6:1** *Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness*
  - **1 Corinthians 6:1-5 Saints**
  - If it is not handled by the saints the pastors should step in (knowing the impact it can have on the spiritual stability of the church)
  - Everyone has a role and responsibility in this (striving to maintain the unity of the church)
  - One thing is clear, leaving unresolved conflict alone is not an option

# Conflict in the Church

**Do you have unresolved conflict with a brother/sister in the church today?**

- Have you gone to them? Or are you waiting until they come to you? (Pride)
- Do you have bitterness or irritation in your heart towards a brother or sister today?
- Are you holding a grudge or harboring un-forgiveness in your heart?

We have already seen that disunity in the body impacts the whole body.

- In order to continue in unresolved conflict, we must hold a low view of God and His bride (for whom His Son died)
  - This is not living worthy of the gospel (1:27) and you cannot be standing firm in the Lord
- Disunity impacts our testimony to the unbelieving world
- Distracts the church from focusing on the great commission
- It is sin
- Do not let another day go by without beginning the steps in resolving this conflict

# Perspective

Paul leaves us with great perspective on our conflicts

*Whose names are in the book of life*

- Whatever conflict you are in (church, marriage, family) gain perspective for a moment and remember that Jesus Christ (God) stood in your place, bore your wrath, died in your place, forgave your sin, granted you righteousness by grace through faith and your name is written in the book of life
- How do you argue at the foot of the cross? How do you demand respect at the foot of the cross? How do we NOT humble ourselves, for His name sake, and seek reconciliation in light of the cross?
- The truth is, we must take our eyes off of Jesus and focus on ourselves to justify continuing in unresolved conflict