

Philippians 2:1-4

"Pleasing Christ (and Godly Pastors) through Grace-Produced Unity"

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*<sup>1</sup> Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, <sup>2</sup> fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. <sup>3</sup> Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription.** Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are welcome to listen to the audio recording, which you may find via [tinysa.com/hopewellarp](http://tinysa.com/hopewellarp))

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Philippians chapter two. Portion this week by God's help versus one through four, let's pray for that help.

Our father in heaven we are grateful that you have announced to us the greatness of your grace. So that when you command us. To duties that we often take to lightly or for granted. And you help us make that correction. That we find that there is an infinite supply in Christ.

For the obedience to what you call us. To pray for the help of your spirit now we pray that he would set Christ before us again, we pray that you would help us to see what you are instructing us to do in this portion of your word we pray that you would even use your word as a means of that grace by which you equip us to do that which you have commanded in that which glorifies you in him in his name we ask it amen.

Philippians 2 verses 1 through 4, these are God's words therefore if there is any consolation in Christ if any comfort of love if any fellowship of the spirit if any affection and mercy fulfill my joy by being like-minded. Having the same love being of one accord of one mind.

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition. Or conceit. But in loneliness of mind, let each of you. Sorry, let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests. But also for the interests. Of others.

So far the, Words of God. Seems like a odd way to start. If there is any consolation in Christ. Mean if there is any. How great is the encouragement the comfort the peace the help that we have in the Lord Jesus if any comfort of love. And its implied in Christ, what do you mean if any comfort of the love of Christ, of course there's a an infinite amount a bottomless ocean of love and the Lord Jesus if any fellowship of the Holy Spirit if any fellowship of the spirit, what do you mean if any if any affection and mercy he's saying even if you just had a tiny little bit of all of these things it would be enough.

For what the apostle is instructing us unto but we don't have just a tiny little bit do we how great does the constellation Christ how great is the comfort of his love how great is the fellowship of the spirit how great is his affection and his mercy to us in which we seek to have him produce in us now, he's going to be instructing us to do some of what he has.

Just been telling us and last week's portion versus 27 to 30 of chapter 1 he hopes to hear about them and now he makes it even more explicit that when he hears he plans to rejoice and he knows that they love him and he says fulfill my joy, but it's it's the sound of an apostle or a pastor who is worried that our loves as they often do get out of proportion.

And that they're forgetting that far more than fulfilling his joy, they ought to be seeking to respond to Christ and to gladden their redeemer that the one who has taken Paul the fire breathing Pharisee and turned him into this man who is so eager and earnest for their spiritual good that.

That he has made Paul or reflection of himself and so there's this response to God the Father there's response to God the son there's response to God the Holy Spirit that we would do what pleases our father that we would seek to bring him joy by our unity with one another and so perhaps you can get to chapter four and he is giving instruction.

I employ sent he to be of the same mind in the, Lord by the time he gets to imploring them urging them to be of the same mind, he will have said in last week's passage that he lips to hear that there are. Excuse me, they stand fast in one spirit with one mind and then in this week's passage fulfill my joy by being like minded having a having the same love being of one accord of one mind.

But perhaps the audience into key are going to find it difficult. In fact, it was almost certain that they're going to find a difficult because the next person chapter 4 is and I urge you also true companion help these women who labored with me in the gospel and so they have they've been Paul's assistants and helpers and they've participated in this gospel ministry, they've heard him proclaim the greatness of consolation in Christ the greatness of the comfort that we have in the love of Jesus the greatness of the fellowship that we have.

From God the Holy Spirit to goes with us and everything in our lives the greatness of the affection and mercy of God to us and that he produces in us and and when the path for a preferred itis comes and he says now Yoda announced into key, you know, the Apostle commanded you in Christ to be of one mind and he told me that I should help you don't you remember what he said as your great help in chapter two all that Christ has done.

For us and in us by his grace and a great help we need for these relationships in the church with one another you remember the apostles in the gospel of Luke when they heard how much they have to forgive one another and they're response was Lord increase our faith, well the Lord does give us faith by his grace he gives us consolation in Christ to give us the comfort of love he gives us the fellowship of his spirit he gives us

his affection and mercy toward us and in us and so we are to seek.

One another's joy as a reflection of Christ to who seeks our joy who says to us these things. I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you and that you may have it to the full so. How do we please Christ we please Christ by being like-minded so you have doctrine at the front and the end like-minded at the front there in verse two and then of one mind at the end but very similar to last week where we saw that unity is at least doctrinal but never just doctrinal being like-minded having right doctrine, especially the knowing and believing the truth about who the Lord Jesus is who the Holy Spirit is.

What God has done what God is doing whom he has made us to be unto him in relationship with him he has made himself to be unto us by bringing us into that relationship in which he is that to us our covenant God and our redeemer our companion our counselor our our friend who sticks closer than a brother and who has that love that is that no man has greater than that he has laid down his life for us.

When we have that like-mindedness and we're holding to that truth then that is a truth that is going to push us into having the same love for one another not just the same love as one another surely that's true we'll love God and we'll love brother and we'll love neighbor because the truth of scripture the truth that God gives us is designed to produce in us the holiness to which he commands us he's sanctifies us by his truth as word is truth, but this same love is not just same as one another it's.

The same love as God himself and we see our brother or our sister as the one who Christ has done all this for we see the Lord Jesus doing that and we ought to imitate the heart of our Savior towards them even as the apostle told them earlier in verse eight of chapter one.

God is my witness how greatly our long for you all with the viscera the innards the guts of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so it's a doctrinal unity that produces not just. Love and zeal though, these are what he mentions but really produces the image of Christ in us this same love and this one accord being both with one another and with the Lord Jesus well what gets in the way well gets in the way the most is in a nasty overgrowth of love of self.

I don't know if you've ever run into one of these people who think that, Yeah overgrowth in the gut is the cause of every problem that humanity is currently facing and that's all that they could talk about or perhaps you run into a physician who thinks everything is mold well the that may or may not be true as far as as the gut or you know, these diseases are concerned but it's definitely true is failure to love love God and love brother and love neighbor is concerned not an overgrowth of mold but an overgrowth of of self of self-seeking.

Of self-esteeming the apostle here is not worried that they have too high a self-esteem he's he's concerned that their self-esteem is getting in the way of having a high enough esteem of others says let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit there's not room for any desiring to advance ourselves or to be praised or to think highly of ourselves it all starts in the mind it all starts in the, Heart and where it has to start is with humility and if it starts with humility then the proof of that humility will be in the pudding not the pudding but the pudding of one another ahead of ourselves because we can tell ourselves, oh I I really am thinking lowly of myself and highly of others and we're able to convince ourselves of a lot because our hearts are deceitful above all things and desperately wicked but then when push comes to shove and, Something would.

You good for our brother or sister and it would require some sacrifice on our own part we go ahead and do what's good for us and we say things like I've heard said I'm really working on loving myself so that I can obey love your neighbor as yourself a little bit better than the future well there is a true that self-harm and and self-hate are our inappropriate.

And despising of the image of God and you're not gonna love your neighbor well so long as you're despising God's image because to love your neighbor well means to love God's image in your neighbor, but rarely is the person who says that he really needs to work on loving himself more first before he loves others probably never is that person understanding himself very well and so if we are thinking lowly of ourselves believing that God is attending to everything that we.

Need that he is the one who's given us this consolation and this comfort and this love and this fellowship and this affection and this mercy God has heaped all of these onto us so that we are free to give so much of our attention to serving him and to esteeming others as more important than ourselves because God is going to take care of us to putting others interests ahead of ours looking out not only for our own interests, but also for the interests of others.

And this is something that I encourage you especially to think about in connection with your own family in your own home, we often think of what we ought to do for our brothers and sisters and thinking lowly of ourselves and putting others interests ahead of head of ours and we think of that with connection to our neighbors or maybe connection the people in the church, well the people in the church that God has placed in most immediate proximity to you.

Is your husband or your wife your children or your parents your brothers and sisters you may find that they are the most difficult ones to esteem ahead of yourself and the most difficult ones whose interests for you to put their interests ahead of your own look not only to yours but to theirs, but if you find it most difficult with them, isn't that probably because this is where your flesh is most exposed.

And this is the first and primary field for you to embrace what God has done for you in Christ and producing you a selflessness when you're when your family experiences that from you then you may then you are especially pleasing God in where he has put you in your primary duties and as a difficult thing remember when we came out of Ephesians and he was talking about darkness verse light in.

Fact.5 and then you get to chapter 6 and he's talking about your spiritual battle what does he place right in the middle it says every day relationships, isn't it and yet there is abundant grace in Christ for it as we see in chapter 1 let's ask him for that grace.

Our Lord Jesus Christ. When we read someone say if any immediately we think what do you mean how great is the grace the love the comfort of

of my Lord but Lord Jesus forgive us because if we really sought to be that great we would not find it so hard to be lowly and to look out for the interests of others and to love with your love and to delight to do good to them him you have delighted to give yourself for.

And so we confess that we have had the comparative smallness of our valuing of your grace exposed but we thank you that that grace is exactly the solution so we pray for the ministry of your spirit that we might see greatly how gracious you have been to us and that you would reproduce your own character in us thank you for this portion of Philippians bless to us what we heard last week what we heard just now what we'll be hearing the next couple of weeks about.

Your own example and what you have done for us even as you are setting that example for we ask it in your name our dear Redeemer, amen.