

Our Motives for Unity
Philippians 2:01-02A
Series: Joy and Gratitude in Christ

1. Introduction

- a. One of the greatest individual attack on any church is the threat of disunity that can erupt into a full-fledged war.
- b. Disunity within a church is always a work of the flesh and the enemy and it is never a work of the Spirit of God.
 - i. We know this because the Word of God is replete with examples than beckon fellow believers to walk in harmony.
 - ii. **Romans 15:5-7** May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, (6) that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (7) Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.
 - iii. **1 Corinthians 1:10** I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.
 - iv. **2 Corinthians 13:11** Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.
 - v. **Galatians 5:26** Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.
 - vi. **Ephesians 4:1-6** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, (2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, (3) eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (4) There is one body and one Spirit--just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call-- (5) one Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
 - vii. **Colossians 3:12-15** Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, (13) bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has

forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (14) And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. (15) And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

- c. The foundation for believers' oneness is the unity God granted in answer to Jesus' prayer when he said:
 - i. **John 17:21** that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.
 - d. We cannot compromise doctrines or principles that are clearly biblical, but to humbly defer to one another on secondary issues is a mark of spiritual strength, not weakness.
 - e. Discord is usually generated by only a few people and yet it spreads throughout the ranks.
 - f. Paul gives us: A. 3 necessary elements on which unity must be built: B. The right motives for unity: C. The right means.
2. Verses 1-2A—The right motives for spiritual unity (5 realities here)
- a. The first four are based upon the Goodness of the Lord and the last one is a personal appeal.
 - b. First—Encouragement in Christ
 - i. Because we have been encouraged by Christ (helped and saved) then we are to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel.
 - ii. This command demands that Christians make pursuing godly unity a response to the believer's union with Christ.
 - c. Second—Any comfort from love
 - i. Literal meaning of speaking closely with someone, and with the added idea of giving comfort and solace.
 - ii. The consoling love is that which the lord grants to unworthy sinners in the grace of salvation.
 - d. Third—any participation in the Spirit (Fellowship)
 - i. Koinōnia – describes partnership and mutual sharing.
 - ii. To inhibit or be indifferent to spiritual unity is to both grieve the Spirit and quench His work.
 1. **1 Corinthians 12:13** For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

- e. Fourth—Affection and sympathy
 - i. These are the same qualities that we find in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - ii. Affection – Greek *Splanchna* – literally the bowels; the word is used in connection with deep, personal longing, especially for those who are dearly loved.
 - iii. Sympathy – Geek *oik-tir-mos* – mercies of God
 - f. Fifth – Complete my joy – a personal appeal
 - i. This is the Apostles Paul's personal desire and it is the desire of the leadership of God's Garden Church
 - ii. To so reward a faithful servant of the Lord is a legitimate goal for believers to have.
 - 1. It shows gratitude and growth.
 - iii. The New Testament makes it clear that churches are to love, honor, respect, and appreciate their human leaders—show these qualities by walking in unity.
 - 1. **Hebrews 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.
3. Benediction –
- a. **3 John 1:4** I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.