

Unity Through Humility

# Introduction

- Focus on unity
  - Call for unity
  - Keys to attaining and maintaining unity:
    - Truth
    - Relationship
    - Goals
    - Obedience
  - Last Key: Humility
    - Philippians 2:1-11
    - Context is centered on unity!
    - For unity to occur, everyone must have the right attitude

# Introduction

## *Philippians 1:27*

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,

# Introduction

## *Philippians 2:1–2*

1 Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

- Avoid acting out of selfishness
- KJV uses: “strife or vainglory”
- Condemnation against self promotion
- Often causes problems in local congregations
  - Some positions given as gifts of service to the church
  - Idea is corrupted to think of these as positions of power
  - Leads to campaigning for these positions!
  - Anyone can have the problem of selfish ambition

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

## ***Philippians 2:3–4***

3 *Let nothing be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

2052 ἔριθεία [*eritheia* /er·ith·i·ah/] n f. Perhaps as the same as 2042; TDNT 2:660; TDNTA 256; GK 2249; Seven occurrences; AV translates as “strife” five times, “contention” once, and “contentious + 1537” once. **1** **electioneering or intriguing for office.** 1a apparently, in the NT a courting distinction, **a desire to put one’s self forward, a partisan and fractious spirit which does not disdain low arts.** 1b **partisanship, fractiousness.**

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

## ***Ephesians 4:11–12***

11 And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,



# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

*Philippians 2:3–4*

3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

- Second part: Nothing should be done through conceit (vain glory)
  - Thinks more highly of himself than he ought to
  - This is at the heart of selfish ambitions!
- What is the answer to the problem?
  - Humility
  - Philippians 2:3-4 (AGAIN!)
  - Must learn true humility!
  - Lowliness of mind
    - Not a natural attitude!

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

**2754** κενοδοξία [*kenodoxia* /ken·od·ox·ee·ah/] n f. From 2755; TDNT 3:662; TDNTA 426; GK 3029; AV translates as “vainglory” once. **1** vain glory, **groundless, self esteem, empty pride**. **2** a vain opinion, error.

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

## ***Romans 12:3***

3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

*Proverbs 25:27*

27 *It is not good to eat much honey; So to seek one's own glory is not glory.*

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

## *Philippians 2:3–4*

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

**5012 ταπεινοφροσύνη** [*tapeinophrosune* /tap·i·nof·ros·oo·nay/] n f. From a compound of 5011 and the base of 5424; TDNT 8:1; TDNTA 1152; GK 5425; Seven occurrences; AV translates as “humility” three times, “humbleness of mind” once, “humility of mind” once, “lowliness” once, and “lowliness of mind” once. **1 the having a humble opinion of one’s self. 2 a deep sense of one’s (moral) littleness. 3 modesty, humility, lowliness of mind.**

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

- Paul was not saying to ACT humble...He was saying to BE humble!
  - The one who ACTS humble still seeks his own good!
- Esteeming others as better than yourself causes you to look out for the interests of others.
  - If there is a conflict, how do I respond?
  - I MUST consider what is best for my brother!
  - It is truly difficult to leave selfish desires and ambitions behind
- Many think of how well these passages apply to others...
  - The lesson is for ME!



# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

## *Colossians 2:18*

18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in *false humility* and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

## ***Colossians 2:23***

23 These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, **false humility**, and neglect of the body, *but are* of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

# Avoid Selfish Ambition or Conceit

## ***Romans 12:9–10***

9 *Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.* 10 *Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another...*

# The Mind of Christ...

- Paul gave the ultimate example of the principle of humility
  - Philippians 2:5-8
  - Paul emphasized the mind of Christ
  - We learn to think like Christ and act like Him!
- The example of Christ:
  - He was in heaven with the Father, but chose to come to earth and offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin
  - He “humbled Himself and became obedient...”
    - Illustrates both humility and obedience!
  - We must have the same submissive, obedient mind
    - To God and brethren!

# The Mind of Christ...

## ***Matthew 28:18–20***

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even to the end of the age.*” Amen.

# The Mind of Christ...

***Ephesians 5:21***

21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.

# The Mind of Christ...

- God exalted Christ because he was submissive, and obedient
- True humility leads to serving the Lord and our brethren
  - With humility, we grow to be more like Christ and that is what people see in us, rather than our own selfish will!

# The Mind of Christ...

## ***1 Peter 5:5–7***

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” 6 **Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,** 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.



# The Mind of Christ...

## ***Hebrews 5:9***

9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him...

# The Mind of Christ...

***Philippians 1:21***

21 For to me, to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

# The Mind of Christ...

## ***Galatians 2:20***

20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

# Conclusion

- Humility may be the hardest trait to adopt
  - We cannot put the rest of the keys of unity together without humility
    - Will never submit to God's truth
    - Will never develop the kinds of relationships that God desires
    - Will never choose to set goals that lead to eternal life
    - Will never submit to God in complete obedience
  - Humility has us lay aside our will, and adopt the will of God