

Home Group Notes

Home Group meet throughout the area to live as family, to encourage one another, to pray and praise God. See our website to connect in a group.

Share

How does conflict in your family or close friends affect you?

- This week's passage is focused on solving personal conflict within the family of God (in the Philippian church).
- Many of the famous verses we know about rejoicing and not being anxious are in this passage. The context is resolving conflict.

Learn from the Bible

Read Philippians 4:1-9

How does Paul (the author) express affection for the recipients? (1)

- Paul addresses them as "Brothers and sisters"
- Whom I love
- Whom I long for
- My joy
- My crown
- Dear friends
- Together, these make up the most elaborate expression of love for any group in the NT.

What is the problem and command? Who all is enlisted to help? (2-9)

- Euodia and Synteche are not of the "same mind" – they are contending with each other
- This is causing problems of disunity in the church
- Paul pleads for them to be of the same mind in the Lord
- Paul enlists "my true companion" – probably Timothy or Epaphroditus
- Paul also enlists the entire church to follow his continuing instructions

Being of the “same mind” is a theme in the letter. What are the reasons and reminders of why this is so important?

- We are all “in Christ”
- We are to be contending together for the gospel. We are coworkers
- We are brothers and sisters
- Our names are written in the book of life. Our future is all set
- We are to Rejoice in the Lord rather trying to get our way
- Our gentleness is a witness to the world of the joy in Christ.
- We are not called to live an anxious life
- We receive the peace of God and the God of peace whom guards our hearts and minds

Overview the entire process of how they were to resolve and live? (2-9)

- Resolve in our hearts to be of the same mind – to pursue unity, harmony
- Enlist others to help us through conflict
- To remember and reflect on who we are in Christ and that our names are written in the book of life
- To come to God with our feelings and needs, to ask God to answer specific requests,
- To think on, focus on, ponder good things (named) rather than keep fixating our thoughts on our conflict or the people with whom we are contending.

Discuss Together

Why do you think Paul chose to call out these two people in a letter to be read to the whole church? How might this affect them? the church?

- This conflict was (1) leaders, (2) affecting the whole church, (3) affecting their witness in the world, (4) enlisted other leaders and instructing the entire church
- This would add urgency and gravity. Each leader involved would realize how important this was to resolve.
- The entire church needed to hear and learn from this situation

What does Paul say to do when there is unresolved conflict that affects God’s family? How is the Lord (Christ Jesus) in the center of it all?

- We are God's children, brothers and sisters
- We are on mission to reach others with the good news
- To do: (1) Remember who we are and look beyond ourselves, (2) Involve others in the process of resolving the conflict (3) focus on our attitudes (a theme in the letter) (4) remember our mission, (5) pray – to turn God with our anxieties / feelings, issues, (6) trust God to help us be “gentle” – learning to no have to have our way, (7) expect God to be with us and bring peace, (8) redirect our thought life away from the conflict and on to good things.

Why is solving conflict within the church so important? How does this scenario and solution center on Jesus and the character of God? The mission of the church?

- If you have been in churches for a while, then you know that conflict is still a problem in churches.
- When leaders are in conflict, this affects the unity and peace of the entire church.
- People begin to enter into the argument, take sides, and soon the church is in disunity and fragmentation.
- The family is hurt, the mission is stifled, and God's name is dishonored.
- There are 9 references to God/Jesus in these few verses. Paul repeatedly reminds us that we are His, our future with Him is set, and that we should always live before Him in prayer, in love with Him and one another.
- If we are followers of Jesus, we are to reflect His character. When people see us, they are to see Jesus. The evidence should be the fruit of the Spirit including “gentleness.”

May the God of peace lead you,

Steve