

Philippians: Gospel Partnership

Agree in the Lord

Philippians 4:2-3 ESV [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.

What can we learn from these specific requests Paul makes to the congregation in Philippi?

Intro

"Apostolic attitudes are Christian ideals." – preachers notes on Philippians

Examples

Philippians 3:18 ESV - [18] For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you **even with tears**, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Philippians 4:1 ESV [1] Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

Exceptions such as Galatians 2:11-14 ESV - [11] But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. [12] For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. [13] And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. [14] But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

↳ context that indicates these attitudes are not ideal
 ↳ Scripture suggests this is not the normal approach

With the idea that "apostolic attitudes are Christian ideals" in mind,

Prop: Reconciliation resulting in a restored single-mindedness is the shared responsibility of all believers; the Gospel empowers this effort.

Definition: the re-establishment of friendly relations

Not: Theological Definition: God's restoration of a harmonious relationship with sinful humanity through Jesus Christ

FCF → We are prone to disagreements

Despite Paul's exhortations in 1:27 (Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,) and 2:2 (complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.) Paul still expects disagreements, as in 3:15 (Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.), which have the potential to be divisive breaches in their like-minded unity.

Not just in the church, but all humans - Galatians 5:19-21 ESV [19] Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, [20] idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, [rivalries, dissensions, divisions,] [21] envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. → politics, race relations, etc
→ hard wired for conflict

Nevertheless, Paul exhorts two Philippians, despite our penchant as humans for division, to agree in the Lord. We can see this as we consider 3 Apostolic Attitudes that appear in this passage, keeping in mind that these often represent the Christian ideal.

Three Apostolic Attitudes

1. **Agree in the Lord** - I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord ~ Paul's Attitude = we should agree
 - a. Don't know much about these two
 - b. Entreat = urge strongly
 - c. Agree = "to think the same ^{thing} way," to share the same mindset
 - d. Verse 2:2 with the same phrase—think the same thing—may point us towards the type of disagreement between the two (complete my joy by **being of the same mind**, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind); the disagreement was one that unity was at stake
 - e. Disagreement was important enough for Paul to deal with it explicitly in a letter ⇒ NOT ALL DISAGREEMENTS ARE CREATED EQUAL
 - f. Imagine the letter being read – Paul names names ⇒ Angeba + Graham
 - g. How can we agree? Consider:

"Such agreement does not mean uniformity, but rather a willingness to set aside personal agendas for the greater good of unity around the gospel and its progress in the world. The Lord Jesus Christ is the grand, transcendent reality whom both women share in common. They should **focus on Him** until His unifying power causes their specific points of difference to fade into relative insignificance and cease to cause division. 'Is this more important than our shared love for Christ?' is a question that would bring the death of many trivial rifts."

2. **Mutual Help** - Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women... Paul's Attitude = we should help one another

- a. Don't know true companion...possibly the person's name, Luke, etc

Do you agree that we should agree?

- b. Help = aiding someone by taking part in an activity with them
- c. Get your siblings for supper; "Hey! It's supper time!"
- d. Also the idea of clasping something together – stuck in pickup truck after accident *↳ grabbing + locking hands*
- e. True companion = yokefellow = The picture is that of two oxen yoked together pulling equally in order to plough effectively. In the ancient world, they would put a yoke upon the necks of a new married couple, or chains on their arms, to show that they were to be closely united, functioning as one person. *⇒ Paul's attitude ⇒ yoked together*

The 3rd Apostolic attitude is...

Do you share this attitude?

3. **Gospel Primacy** - 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.

3 ways we can see this gospel-centered apostolic attitude

- a. Paul/Euodia/Syntyche/True companion/Clement/Timothy/Epaphroditus/others have labored side by side
 - i. Labored side by side = "striving side by side for the faith of the gospel," from 1:27 – the phrase used is associated with battle or competition – this [the gospel] is something worth fighting for, worth spending your life for
- b. In the gospel – contesting and striving in gospel ministry:
 - i. Philippians 1:7 ESV [7] It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. *Paul has hammered this home!*

- ii. Philippians 1:12 ESV [12] I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel,
 - iii. Philippians 1:16 ESV [16] The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.
 - iv. Philippians 1:27 ESV [27] Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,
- c. The Book of Life - The ultimate purpose of the Book of Life is to record the names of those who have trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation and have His righteousness imputed to their account (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 3:22; 4:3, 6, 9, 11; 2 Cor. 5:21). Since Christ's atoning sacrifice is the basis for redemption, it is also referred to as "the Lamb's Book of Life" (Rev. 13:8+; 21:27+).

GOSPEL - *Book of life - the gospel's primacy is seen in the end of all things*
Reservations

We have seen Paul's apostolic attitude about agreeing in the Lord and helping each other as ideals for us as Christians. We also see that the striving and laboring and fighting together show the central importance of the gospel to Paul. This striving and laboring takes place in and for the gospel, it is gospel ministry for gospel partners. Its primacy is seen in the reference to the Book of Life which records those who, by God's grace, will inherit all the benefits of the gospel.

And it is the gospel, and its benefits, which Paul has already presented in regards to finding unity through a shared mindset.

How do we work through disagreements? How do we navigate to the place of agreeing in the Lord? And how can we help others?

Agree in the Lord

How do we agree in the Lord?

- Go back through Philippians ... but before we do, this

"Such agreement does not mean uniformity, but rather a willingness to set aside personal agendas for the greater good of unity around the gospel and its progress in the world. The Lord Jesus Christ is the grand, transcendent reality whom both women share in common. They should focus on Him until His unifying power causes their specific points of difference to fade into relative insignificance and cease to cause division. 'Is this more important than our shared love for Christ?' is a question that would bring the death of many trivial rifts."

quote points us in the right direction

1. Look to the gospel and its benefits:

a. Philippians 2:1-2 ESV [1] So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, [2] complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

i. Is there encouragement in Christ?

ii. Is there comfort in the love of the father?

iii. Does God's Spirit reside in you participating ⁱⁿ your life?

2. Reckon

a. Others as more significant than you

b. Both other's interests and your own

Philippians 2:3-5 ESV [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. [5] Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,