

Live in Harmony

Phil 4:1-5

Feb 21, 2021

Phil 4:1-5 Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved. 2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. 3 Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. 4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.

Paul's attitude towards the Philippians

They are beloved - loved by God and by Paul.

They were family – his brothers (and sisters).

He longed (to desire earnestly) to be with them again.

(Rom 1:11; 2Cor 5:2; 9:14; Phil 1:8; 2:26; 1Thes 3:6; 2Tim 1:4; 1Pt 2:2;)

They were his joy.

1Thes 2:19-20 For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and joy.

They were his crown (stephanos) – refers to the crown or wreath that was given and sat upon the head of a victorious athlete after he had won the victor's crown in his particular event.

Paul gives three commands “in the Lord”.

1. To stand fast in the Lord

stand fast (stekete) = to stand firm, persist, persevere; It is a picture of a soldier standing fast against the onslaught of the enemy. He refuses to give ground no matter the pressure and strength of the attack. He does not flinch; he is not unstable, and he is never defeated.

Scripture exhorts believers to stand fast in several things:

Grace - 1Pt 5:12 ... exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!

Rom 5:2 ...we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand;

Faith - 1Cor 16:13 ... stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong (Rom 11:20; 2Cor 1:24)

The Gospel - 1Cor 15:1 ... the gospel ... in which also you stand,

The biblical teachings that we have been taught - 2Thes 2:15

Freedom in Christ - Gal 5:1 It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

Together in one spirit - Phil 1:27 ... that you are standing firm in one spirit ...

Against the devil with the armor of God

Eph 6:11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

Eph 6:13-14 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

2. [Euodia and Syntyche] to live in harmony in the Lord

There can be no unity unless it is in Christ.

By being united with Christ, we can have unity with each other.

Rom 6:5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection,

Unity is possible through putting off the old and putting on the new (Col 3:8-17).

Col 3:14 Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

We can only preserve the unity.

Eph 4:3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Man can never really love each other until they receive the love Jesus Christ.

We love because He first loved us (1Jn 4:19).

Love is found in Jesus (1Tim 1:14; 2Tim 1:13).

God has given to us a spirit of love (2Tim 1:7).

God's love controls us (2 Cor 5:14).

Euodia and Syntyche

These two ladies are (believed to be) leaders of house-churches.

In the past they have helped Paul in the work of the gospel;

They are Paul's fellow workers along with Clement.

Their names are written in the book of life.

Paul asked "true companion" to help these women in their struggle.

true companion = (sunzuge) was probably someone who was given this name at baptism. This name refers to the yoke or collar that was fitted around the neck of oxen for plowing. The collar was attached to the plow and held the 2 oxen together so that they would pull together and more quickly get the work done.

3. To rejoice in the Lord

Joy has nothing to do with circumstances or material things.

A man living in luxury can be wretched and a man in the depths of poverty can overflow with joy.

A man blessed with prosperity and health can be depressed, angry and discontented while another man upon whom life has afflicted every possible blow can be serenely joyful.

Christian joy is independent of all things on earth because it has its source in the continual presence of Christ.

Rom 12:12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, (Ps 32:11)

1Thes 5:16 Rejoice always; (2Cor 13:11)

Hab 3:17-18 Though the fig tree should not blossom And there be no fruit on the vines, Though the yield of the olive should fail And the fields produce no food, Though the flock should be cut off from the fold And there be no cattle in the stalls, 18 Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.

Let your gentle spirit be known to all men (v.5)

gentle spirit = (epieikeia) is one of the most untranslatable of all Greek words. It is translated:

patience = Wycliffe; softness = Tyndale, Cranmer; the patient mind = the Geneva Bible;

modesty = the Rheims Bible; forbearance = the Revised Version;

magnanimity = the New English Bible

The Greeks themselves explained this word as "justice and something better than justice." They said that "epieikeia" ought to come in when strict justice became unjust because of its generality.

There may be individual instances where a perfectly just law becomes unjust or where justice is not the same thing as equity. A man has the quality of “epieikeia” if he knows when not to apply the strict letter of the law, when to relax justice and introduce mercy. As an

epieikeia is used 5 times in the New Testament

Elders are to be gentle 1Tim 3:3; Tit 3:2

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. Jas 3:17

Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. 1Pt 2:18

The Lord is near.

1Cor 16:22 If anyone does not love the Lord, he is to be accursed. Maranatha.

(Rom 13:12; Heb 10:25; Jas 5:8; 1Pt 4:7)

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