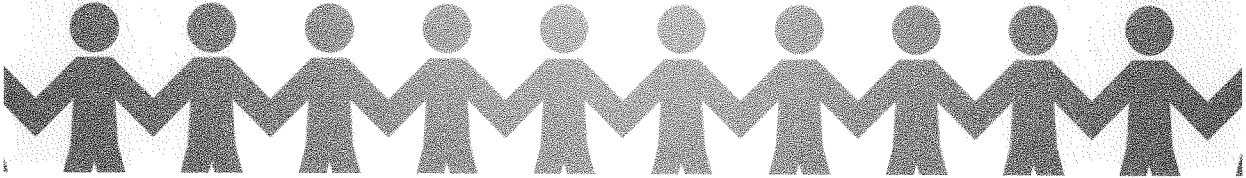


The Joy and Pursuit of Christian Unity

Philippians 2:1-4



Series: Christian Unity
Title: Think the Same

Text: Philippians 2:1-8
Date: 10/18/2026

Paul's Appeal for Unity (2:1-4):

Context:

- Paul established his affection for them and his joy in their partnership in gospel ministry (1:6-11).
- Paul is imprisoned and the Philippians sent Epaphroditus to help him (1:12-14; 2:25).
- Paul has joy in his sufferings, joy in Christ being proclaimed, and wants to continue in ministry for the Philippians "joy in the faith" (1:15-26).

Philippians 2:1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,

"Therefore" – connects to 1:27-28; conclusion of 1:27-30.

Philippians 1:27–28 Only live your lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear about your circumstances, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind contending together for the faith of the gospel, in no way alarmed by *your* opponents—which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God.

Philippians 2:2 fulfill my joy, that you think the same way, by maintaining the same love, *being* united in spirit, thinking on one purpose,

“fulfill my joy” - the main verb of the text. It’s a command to complete, realize, or accomplish Paul’s joy in full.

Why is it right and effective for Paul to command them to fulfill his joy?

- Paul’s joy is Christ’s joy because it’s rooted in truth.
- Paul’s joy is desired by the Philippians because they love him.
- Paul’s joy is a contagious joy.

Philippians 2:1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion...

Four Defining Realities of Christian Relationship:

1. Encouragement in _____.

“if there is any encouragement in Christ”

Philippians 1:29–30 For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 having the same struggle which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

2. Consolation of _____.

“if there is any consolation of love”

3. Fellowship of the _____.

“if there is any fellowship of the Spirit”

“fellowship” – to have in common, to share in; togetherness.

2 Corinthians 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

Believers’ fellowship of the Spirit: 1 Cor. 6:19; 1 Cor. 12:13.

4. Affection and compassion.

“if any affection and compassion”

“affection” - in 1:8 Paul shares that he longs for the Philippians with the affection of Christ Jesus.

“compassion” - the outward expression of deep feeling in passionate yearning and action.

The Object of Paul's Joy: Gospel Unity

Philippians 2:2 fulfill my joy, that you think the same way, by maintaining the same love, *being* united in spirit, thinking on one purpose,

“thinking the same” was indispensable to resolving their division (4:2), being full of joy, contending for the gospel (1:27), and standing firm against opponents (1:28).

Psalm 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!

“think the same way” - to be consciously anchored in and operating from the same _____ truth as one another.

A similar instruction occurs in Rom. 12:16; 15:5; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phi. 4:2.

The Substance of Christian Unity:

1. Having the _____ love.

“maintaining” - the ongoing possession of.

“the same love” – notice it’s not “have love”; emphasis on the same, identical love.

2. _____ identity with one another.

“united in spirit” – lit. “one souled”; Rom. 12:5 we are members of one another.

3. Thinking about one _____.

“thinking on one purpose” – lit. “one thinking.”

Philippians 3:14–15 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, think this way; and if in anything you think differently, God will reveal that also to you.

4. Viewing oneself _____ and others _____.

Philippians 2:3

doing nothing from selfish ambition or vain glory,

but with humility of mind

regarding one another as more important than yourselves,

Negative: “nothing from selfish ambition, nothing according to vain glory”

Bridge: “humility of mind” - a lowliness of thinking; to view oneself in a lowly way. This flows from the gospel (Eph. 4:2 and by extent 1:27), our election (Col. 3:12), and an exalted view of God (1 Pet. 5:5).

Positive: “regarding one another” – considering or viewing other believers in a specific way.

“as more important than yourselves” – in 3:8 to describe the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus. In 4:8 to describe how the peace of God surpasses human thinking.

View others as _____ of being served in love.

Philippians 2:4 not *merely* looking out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Lit. “each one not looking out for the things of yourselves but each one also the things of others.”

“looking out for” - to look carefully for; to view attentively.

“also” - indicates an adding on top of, not a replacement of.

The thinking that leads to unity regards one another as worthy to be served and the needs of others as the _____, all because of humility.

The Example: look to _____ as the forerunner and foremost example of this way of thinking.

Philippians 2:5–8 Have this way of thinking in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although existing in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a slave, by being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

“thinking” – the mindset of humility that regarding others; central thought to v.1-4.

“in yourselves” – be present among you.

“also in Christ Jesus” – present in Jesus.

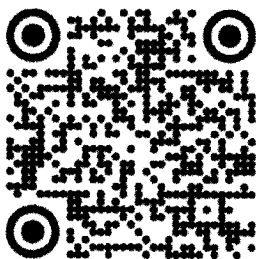
Mark 10:45 “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Conclusion:

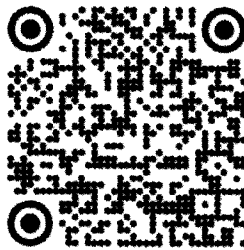
As a church we must all have the same thinking as our Lord in order to fulfill our calling to proclaim the gospel, live the gospel, and stand for the gospel. Without this shared mindset, we will _____; with it, we will _____.

Discussion Questions:

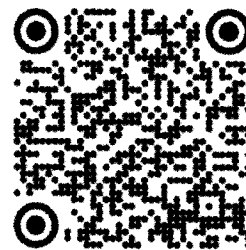
1. How does gospel obedience (Phi. 1:27-28) empower unity among Christians? Does disobedience to the gospel lead to disunity? If so, how?
2. Read 2:1. How do these realities between Christians encourage Christians to listen to one another, work together, be united, etc.? How do we remind ourselves of these realities more often?
3. If thinking the same refers to believers being consciously anchored and operating in the same gospel truths, what truths are these? Look specifically at Phi. 1:27-2:11.
4. Why is it difficult to regard others as more important than ourselves? What brings us to have “humility of mind?”
5. How does a Christian grow in looking out for the interests of others? List 2-3 Christians in your life that you are around regularly and come up with 2-3 ideas for what interests of theirs you can be looking out for.



*Meet
the Staff*



*Online
Giving*



*Weekly
Announcements*

Blanks: Christ, love, Spirit, gospel, same, shared, purpose, humbly, highly, worthy, priority, Jesus, fail, succeed.