

How to Live in Love and Unity

Philippians 2:1-4

Introduction

How important is it that we live in love and unity with our brothers and sisters in Christ?

- Paul says if we don't have love, nothing else we do counts for anything (1 Corinthians 13).
- Jesus said our unity would help people see the truth of who he is (John 17:21-23).
- John says one way we know we are saved is because we love our brothers and sisters (1 John 3:14-16).

So it's crucial that we pay heed to what Paul teaches us about love in Philippians 2:1-4.

What is the point of verse 1? (v.1)

Paul is saying that the encouragement we have in Christ, the comfort we have from his love, the Spirit's work of helping us behold Christ's glory, and the affection and sympathy that God has for us — can so fill our hearts that we are able to live in love and unity with our brothers and sisters.

What would it look like to live in love and unity? (vv.2-4)

We would be of the same mind with each other – overlooking nonessential differences and focusing on what we share in Christ.

We would have the same love – sharing the same love for Christ together.

We would be in full accord and of one mind – uniting together in our purpose of glorifying Christ, building each other's faith, and bringing people to faith.

We would do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but instead would humbly count others more significant than ourselves.

We would look not only to our own interests, but also the interests of others.

What does this mean for us?

Let's seek and enjoy all that we have in Christ (v.1), and let that flow out in love and unity with each other.



HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING

(Sometimes in our home groups we talk about Sunday's teaching, so we can work together on responding to God's Word — asking questions, sharing insights, talking together.)

In the past, what would you have done if you found yourself not loving or not being in unity with a brother or sister?

According to this passage, what does Paul tell us to do?

Think of a time when you were not of the same mind with other believers. Can you see how that division shows that your heart was set on something else more than all that you have in Christ? Why or why not?

Does it work for you to pray silently for the work of the Spirit, set your heart on the truth of who Christ is, and experience the Spirit's heart-changing work? This is what verse 1 is all about, and is the foundation for being loving and unified with other believers.

On a scale of 1 (not very much) and 10 (lots) How much does your home group love each other? How united are you together? What could you do as a group to grow in this?

Why is it so hard to look to the interests of others? Does it make sense that Christ can so secure and satisfy you that you know all your interests are taken care of by him — so you are able to look to the interests of others? Why or why not? How can you experience this more?

