

## **Pursue Loving Unity Philippians 4:1-3**

### **Introduction**

Jesus is very concerned when we are not walking in love and unity with each other. In fact, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us that if we are on our way to church, and remembered that someone is holding something against us, we should turn back from the church gathering, and first go and be reconciled with them.

And Philippians 4:1-3 will help us do that.

### **How does Paul describe his love for fellow-believers? (v.1)**

He says "therefore, my brothers."

He says "whom I love and long for."

He says they are his "joy and crown."

And he calls them "my beloved."

And this is not just his love and affection for certain believers; this is his love and affection for all the believers in the church.

### **Why does Paul emphasize his love and affection for all these believers? (v.1)**

One reason might be to explain that the reason he used such strong language was because he cared so much about them.

But another reason is because of where he is going in verses 2 and 3. He wants his example of love for other believers to impact Euodia and Syntyche and the whole church.

So if we are at odds with someone in the church, or if we know of others who are at odds, we need to hear what Paul says in verses 2 and 3.

### **How does Paul respond to division in the church? (vv.2-3)**

He entreats and pleads with them.

He entreats them on the basis of the Lord himself.

He asks a church leader to help these women agree.

He reminds them that both of their names are written in the book of life.



## **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.)*

Can you think of a time in the past when you were at odds with someone, and you ended up reconciling with them? Are you glad you ended up reconciled? What did it take to come to reconciliation?

Is there anyone that you are now at odds with? What keeps you from pursuing reconciliation?

Is there anyone you feel fine about, but whom you think might be upset at you? What would Paul want you to do in this situation?

Do you know of any people in the church who are at odds with each other? What Would Paul want you to do in this situation?

What are some other not Christ-centered ways we try to help people reconcile? What approaches are we tempted to use besides entreating them on the basis of the Lord himself, or talking about how both their names are written in the book of life?

Do you agree that if we really understood that our names are written in the book of life, then we would reconcile and not be divided from each other? Why or why not?

What are some not-so-helpful steps in seeking reconciliation? Are there some steps that can make things worse? How can we avoid them? What are some helpful steps that we could take?

Pray for each other so you can take the steps of obedience God wants you to take.

