

# Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Philippians 2:1-5.

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**Transcriber's Note:** The men sing.

A mighty fortress is our God,  
A bulwark never failing.  
Our helper He, amid the flood  
Of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work us woe.  
His craft and power are great,  
And armed with cruel hate;  
On earth is not his equal.  
Did we in our own strength confide,  
Our striving would be losing.  
Were not the right man on our side,  
The man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who that may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is He.  
Lord Sabaoth His name,  
From age to age the same,  
And He must win the battle.

**Bruce:** And all the Brave Men said,

**Men:** Amen!

**Bruce:** Amen! That was our prayer! What a great prayer we just offered! May the Lord accept that. Well, good morning, men.

**Men:** Good morning.

**Bruce:** I was ready to ask Sig what side of the bed he got up on this morning.

*(Laughter)*

**Sig:** There's only one side.

**Bruce:** Let's turn in our Bibles, please, to Philippians chapter 2. We'll be examining verses 1-5, asking the Lord to be our Teacher. I'll be reading from the English Standard Version. Philippians chapter 2, verses 1-5.

*“So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others, having this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus.”* This is the word of the Lord.

**Men:** Thanks be to God.

**Bruce:** Amen and Amen. What motivates you? Why do you hang in there? What keeps you going? When things are down, what do you need to do to be recharged? What is your motivation? Is it some Scripture promise you might have? That would certainly be

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valid. Is it what you anticipate that God might do for you on this particular day? That might be valid. The bottom line is that when things get difficult, what keeps you going? What is your motivation? That's going to be the theme of our study this morning in Paul's letter to the church at Philippi.

Last week, if you recall, we looked at a description of a life that is worthy of the gospel. And there are seven ingredients in that study that we looked at last week. A life that is consistent with the glory of God, a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ, is a life that is consistent with the gospel of Christ. The message that we preach must be the Person we're talking about. When we talk about the Person and work of Christ, the content of our gospel must be the same as the Person we're describing. Christ is the gospel and the gospel is Christ.

Second, we saw that it is independent of human observation. We don't need people to tell us that we're living a life worthy of the gospel. The Lord needs to confirm that in our hearts. We don't need to have public affirmation. It's independent of public affirmation and human observation.

Thirdly, inside the church there is a unity of gospel truth. We need to be preaching the same truth in the church. The truth that we preach in our individual lives must be the same truth that we're preaching in our corporate lives in the church.

And lastly, there is a steadfastness and hanging in there in the fellowship of God's people. So today we're going to pick that up.

And look at the word *so*. Now your Bible might translate that word *therefore*. But the word *so* in the English Standard Version really means *therefore*. So as you look at the passage we just studied, a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ, the next thing is *so*. That's why I emphasize that. So men, what are you going to do about it? You've heard me say oftentimes that the most important thing you can do when studying the Bible is to ask yourself the question. What am I going to do about what I just learned?

Now we just learned a description of a life that is worthy of the gospel. So what are you going to do about it? That's where Paul picks this up in chapter 2, verses 1-5. He's still explaining verse 27 of chapter 1, living a life that is worthy of the gospel. He's still describing that.

So Paul is emphasizing what he taught us last week. The credibility of the Christian gospel lies in human beings and Christian people—not academicians, not intellectuals, not apologists. The credibility of the gospel lies with us, men. It lies with us. It doesn't lie in the hands of those who argue for the truth intellectually. We need to put it on display personally. There is nothing more that convicts people of the credibility of the gospel than a Christlike life. And there is nothing more that deters people from the Person and work of Christ than an unChristlike life. That's what Paul is dealing with.

Paul's premise is this. He is really leading our way up to verse 5, which says this. "*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.*" Now that's the attitude we want to develop. Our attitude ought to be the same as that of Christ Jesus.

So Paul begins in verse 1 describing four arguments that describe a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ. And we're going to examine those four today. He's not only writing to individuals in the church at Philippi, but he is writing to the corporate body of

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Christ in the church at Philippi. These apply to the corporate life just as much as to the individual life. And he is encouraging these Philippian believers to understand that there is a tremendous impact upon society when a local body, a local church, lives a credible life worthy of the gospel. There is tremendous power in the church when a church does that. And Paul wants them to understand that it is not only an individual responsibility, but corporately we have in the church a responsibility to live a life that is worthy of the gospel.

In one sense I think we can say this, men, that the opinion of the world is not a concern of the church.

**Participant:** Amen.

**Bruce:** We can say that. At the same time, in another sense, it's of critical importance that we realize that the church has a good reputation in our community, regardless of what they say about us. So Paul is writing to them, giving them some arguments about why they are motivated to live a life worthy of the gospel. And that is because the honor of Christ is at stake, not only in our individual lives but our corporate lives.

Let me give you an example. Years ago a friend of mine told me of a situation where he was preaching. And one of the members of his church was a professor at his university. And the professor of this university encouraged this young pagan Hindu man, who as really blaspheming the church. "Have you ever been to a church service?"

And the Hindu said, "No, I've never been to one."

And so my pastor friend encouraged the professor to have the Hindu man come to his church. So the pagan Hindu man came to his church. He went back to the professor, and this is what he reported. He was shocked to see so many people there of a young age, because he thought that the Christian church was for people who were one step away from the grave. He was shocked to see the wide variety of people—men, women, boys and girls. He was shocked about that.

The second thing is this. He was really shocked to see the number of people who came up and said hello to him. He was really shocked at the number of people who extended their hands and said, "Welcome!" He was just amazed at how kind people were. And he came back and told the professor, "I sensed that the Spirit of God was in that place."

**Participant:** Wow!

**Bruce:** Now that's an interesting story, because corporately we need to make sure that in the community the local church has a good reputation. We're not bound by its examinations. That's not what I'm saying. All I'm saying is that when Paul writes these things about being motivated to live a life worthy of the gospel, that applies to the local church just as much as to the individual. Of course the church is made up of individual people. So Paul is writing both to the Philippian congregation as well as to believers as individual people. So let's take a look at what I call *the four ifs*.

The first one is this: *union in Christ*. He says in verse 2 that "*if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy.*" There's where you get your four *ifs*.

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This union is the very basis of our salvation. Now Paul uses the phrase “*in Christ*” 127 times in the New Testament. It's a union in which we are brought into the death, resurrection and glorification of Christ Jesus.

Now this union has several aspects to it. First of all, there is *a divine union*. There is a divine union that we have, which is created by God, who chose us from the foundation of the world.

Look at Ephesians chapter 1. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians in chapter 1 we find this. This is the divine union that we have. “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as He chose us in Him*”—that's your phrase, in Christ, in Him—“*before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.*”

You see that first of all we have a divine union. And why is this a divine union? Because God was pleased to choose us before the foundation of the world. That's where it begins. That is the divine union that Paul is referring to when he says, “If you have any encouragement.””

Now men, what more encouragement do you need than to know this? God chose me before the foundation of the world. Why did He do that? The answer is in Himself. There is no reason for Him to have chosen me before the foundation of the world. If you want to be motivated, just think about that. Before eternity began, I was on his mind. Now do I understand that? No. I believe that and I trust that by faith.

Now if you want to be motivated, men, think about this. God was pleased to choose me before the foundation of the world and I had nothing to do with that. I can't take credit for it. I can't be proud. That's why he says to have the same spirit that Christ has. Be of the same mind, be humble. You see, that ought to be humiliating to us in the sense of the positive side—not being too proud and saying that I earned my way to salvation. You see, the first part of this union is that it's a divine union. God chose us before the foundation of the world.

Secondly, *it's a faith union*. That's another expression of our union with Christ. It's a divine union. It's a faith union. That's what we enter into when we believe in the Lord Jesus. We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the word *in* may be translated into. I like that phrase because it describes more of a union mindset. I believe into the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, I'm not just agreeing with facts. I'm entering into my belief, into my faith. It's a union that I have with Christ. So we believe into the Lord Jesus Christ.

An example would be in Acts chapter 16 with the Philippian jailer who came to the apostle and said, “*What must I do to be saved?*” And he said, “Believe into the Lord Jesus Christ.” Enter into union by your faith into the Person and work of Christ. Paul tells the jailer, “Christ is everything that a sinner like you needs.” It's found in Christ when you have union with Him. He told the jailer, “What you need is to be taken from your alienation and to be united to the Lord Jesus Christ.” That's what it means when you enter into union with, or to believe into.

Now remember. The word *believe* means *to rely upon, depend upon, trust in and adhere to, to rely upon, adhere to, trust in and depend upon*. That's what it is to have a

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faith union. You enter into the relationship you have with Christ by faith, into faith as a result of our divine union.

And thirdly, there is a *spiritual union*. It's a divine union, it's a faith union, and it's a spiritual union.

Look at 1 Corinthians 12:13.

**Transcriber's Note:** 1 Corinthians 12:13, NKJV. "*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.*"

**Bruce:** We are all baptized into one body by the Holy Spirit. That's the language of union. We're baptized into the body of Christ, all of us.

Now brothers, it's important that we understand this. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is an initial experience of all Christians, all Christian believers. It's not a subsequent event after conversion for some Christian believers. It's an initial event. The Scriptures would tell us this: that one cannot be united in this union with the Lord Jesus Christ without the baptism of the Holy Spirit into one body, combined into one body. That's why it's so important to understand the value of a local body of believers having a good reputation, living a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ in the community, because they are all together in one baptized body, the body of Christ.

What do you need to be motivated by, men? Just think. We belong to a body, the body of Christ, by the faith and the divine union that we have. So Paul says that if you have any encouragement by your union with Christ, let that be the motivation for your life. Just ponder those things.

We don't think enough about those types of things. We're always looking for something more tangible. What more tangibility do you need to have than what the Scripture says, that you were chosen before the foundation of the world?

This union means that everything that Jesus Christ is and everything that Christ has done is mine by union with Christ. In John 15 Jesus tells His disciples, "*Without Me you can do nothing.*" He's teaching them that to be separated from Him is like a branch that will not produce any fruit when it is separated from the tree. "You cannot bear any fruit unless you are in union with Me."

Paul was teaching people in the church at Philippi that *humility is the mark of a church that is united with Christ*. What's the thing we want that is evidence of a church that's in union with Christ and will serve the body?

**Participant:** Humility.

**Bruce:** Humility. It's not program activity; it's humility. And why is that? Because you understand that it means you were chosen before the foundation of the world, that you're in divine union, that you have this faith union, and that you have this spiritual union. And the only thing that can produce in you is humility.

You can't flip humility. You can't flip the switch and make yourself humble. You can't wake up one day and say, "Oh, I want to be humble today." That is contrary to human nature. Humility is contrary to our human nature. That's why it's a divine attribute. And a local church that has humility is a church that is united in oneness in the body of Christ. That ought to be an expression of our churches, as well as by individuals.

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I think there is something far greater than just Jesus being in me. A lot of times we talk about Jesus being in me. I think there's something bigger than that. I would encourage you to expand your horizons, men. Think about this. It's that I'm in union with Him. That's a whole different mindset than that Jesus is in me. I'm in union with Him. And all that He is, all that He has done, is mine because of my union with Him. *"Without Me you can do nothing."* *"But in Me you will bear very much fruit."* Men, there can be no fruit-bearing unless we're in union with Christ through the Holy Spirit. That's his first argument. If you need any encouragement, consider the union you have with Christ.

Let me give you another illustration of this *union with Christ* concept, because it's something that we don't talk enough about, and we ought to. Let me read you a statement about a definition of our union with Christ.

*"Our union with Christ has its origin in the election of God the Father before the foundation of the world. It has its culmination in the glorification of the children of God."*

Let me read that again. This is the union that you and I have in Christ. It's far more than just Christ in me. There's a union that we have. *"Our union with Christ has its origin in the election of God the Father before the foundation of the world. It has its culmination in the glorification of the children of God. It has two main features—the electing love of God the Father in the counsels of eternity, and the glorification of our receiving a resurrected body with Christ in glory. The former has no beginning; the latter has no end. Union with Christ is a truth that summarizes several different relationships between believers in the Lord Jesus through which Christians receive every benefit of salvation. We form relationships as a result of our union with Christ."*

I won't have time, but let me just give them to you. First of all, *we are in Christ*. Secondly, *Christ is in us*. Thirdly, *we are like Christ*. And fourthly, *we are with Christ*.

Now that's a description of the union that we have with Christ. And Paul says this. If you want to be encouraged, just consider your union with Christ and what that means. When did that begin? It began in eternity. How can you not be motivated? And how can you not be humbled by that thought? Ponder those thoughts, men, because that will change your lives. That's what happened to the apostle Paul. It changed his life when he began to realize his union with Christ.

Secondly, Paul says that if you need to be motivated, *consider the love from Christ*. First of all, union with Christ, and love from Christ. He writes, *"If there is any comfort from love."* Now that is the love of Christ that He has for us. Paul writes to the church in Corinth that if anyone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person. Notice the tense of that. *"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation."*

If you would ask Paul what changed his life, he would not say that it was his theological studies, although that would be very important. He also would not say that it was his family upbringing or his education, although those things were very important to him.

He would tell us one thing that constrains him. The word *constrain* means *to control*. What constrained Paul and changed his life was his understanding of Christ's love for him—the love of Christ as a motivation. Paul would say this. *"That's what grips me, because it controls my life."*

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It constrained him like the river. Recently we have had people who suffered from flood damage in Pittsburgh. A lot of it was uncontrollable. When you have a valley and you build a retaining wall around it, it controls the water. That was exactly what Paul was using as an illustration. He was saying that “it is the love of Christ that keeps me within boundaries. It keeps me within the boundaries of my life. That’s what changed my life. I’m inside the boundaries and He constrains me as I go through my life. I’m always thinking about the love of Christ and what He has for me, and His love for me. That constrains me from making choices that are not consistent with my living a life worthy of the gospel.” It’s the love of Christ that constrains us.

Sometimes, men, you need a restraining wall. And Paul said that the restraining wall that was controlling his life would be his understanding of Christ’s love for him.

I think that’s why one of the things that we need to consider is our thought life. We need to constantly remind ourselves of Christ’s love for us. In John 14 Jesus said, “*I will not leave you as orphans.*” “I will come and make My habitat with you.”

I’ve recently read some studies that said that there are two things people need to have for a sense of security and significance: a place and a relationship. It was talking about teenagers. They need a place and they need a relationship to feel secure and significant. And in John 14 we have both of those in our union with Christ.

We have a place. Christ takes up His residence within us. That’s the place. And we have the relationship in that He never leaves us. John 14 describes for us the place and the relationship that we have with Christ because of our union with Him. That’s what makes men men of God and women women of God. That’s why people become servants of God, because of the constraining love of Christ that controls their lives.

I believe that Paul would say this. The love of Christ in all of its glory was brought to me in some measure of fullness so that people can see that in my life. We don’t understand the total love of Christ. But to some degree it has come to us in our salvation, and we can understand that. Paul would say, “I’ll never be the same man again.”

If you’re looking for a summary verse that would really describe and summarize the love of Christ for you, to my mind it would be 2 Corinthians 5:21. “*And God made Him who knew no sin to become sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ.*” Now that’s a summary of the entire package of God’s love for us in Christ Jesus. “*God made Him who knew no sin to become sin on our behalf*”—*hupr*, in place of me,—“*so that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ.*”

Now we need to reflect on the agony that Jesus went through on the cross. The end result is that you and I can receive the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus because He did it on behalf of us. “*God made Him who knew no sin to become sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ.*” To my mind, my friends, that is the verse that describes for me what I probe in depth and think about and meditate on—the transaction and exchange that happened on the cross. That’s when you begin to see Christ’s love for you.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones said this. “*Shallow views of the cross of Christ produce superficial men and women.*” How can you ponder the cross and not be moved by that?

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How can you ponder the cross and not be humbled by that? How can you look at the cross and not be motivated to live a life that is worthy of the gospel?

So first of all Paul says this. If there is any encouragement—union with Christ. Secondly, the love of Christ constrains me. And thirdly, *the fellowship of the Spirit*. “*If there is any participation in the Spirit.*” That’s our third understanding and motivation, the third *if*.

Now here is the connection between the Holy Spirit and the meaning of life, and that is that the Spirit lives within me. When the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within us, to take up His location, He produces fellowship with the Godhead in our lives. Men, take a look at John chapter 16, verses 13-15.

*“When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. For He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak. And He will declare to you the things that are to come, for He will glorify Me.”*

Now who is speaking these words?

**Participant:** Jesus.

**Bruce:** Jesus. What is the Holy Spirit’s job description?

**Participant:** Christ.

**Bruce:** To glorify Christ. And He does that in many, many ways, a multitude of ways. But His primary focus is to glorify Him, not to make life easy for us. That is the result, but that’s not the goal. The goal is to glorify Christ. He will do that by empowering us to live our lives in a manner that is worthy of the gospel, for God’s glory. He is the motivation. He gives us the motivation to be glorified by the Holy Spirit. Verse 14 again. *“He will glorify Me, for He will take what is Mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is Mine. Therefore I said that He will take what is Mine and declare it to you.”*

When we study the Scripture, men, we let the Holy Spirit tell us that He is glorifying Christ by helping us to understand who He is in all His glory. And that’s why it’s so important to consider a verse such as 2 Corinthians 5:21. Consider that and ponder that. *“God made Him who knew no sin to become sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ.”* The whole idea of that verse is to glorify Christ Jesus. And He does that through the fellowship that we have in the Holy Spirit.

**Participant:** Amen.

**Bruce:** The Holy Spirit calls attention to the life of Christ. The second thing He does is that *He puts it on display in us*. He calls attention to it, and then He puts His life on display for other people to see. They see that the Holy Spirit is dwelling within us. Take a look at Romans 8, verses 9-11.

**Transcriber’s Note:** Romans 8:9-11, NKJV. *“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”*

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**Bruce:** The Holy Spirit dwells in us. He leads us to glorify Christ and puts us on display so that we will glorify Christ in our conduct. It is His ministry to glorify Christ. And the Holy Spirit does that in us by helping us live a life that is worthy of the gospel. We will seek to live a life that is worthy of the gospel if the Holy Spirit indwells us and imparts His power to us.

And so Paul's final argument is *God's tenderness towards us*. We saw that the first one is union with Christ. The second one is God's love for us in Christ Jesus. The third one is the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. And the fourth motivation would be this: *the tenderness and compassion of God*. Paul writes, "*If there is any affection and sympathy,*"—tenderness and compassion.

Now the word *tenderness* means this: *the kind of care one has*. Now this is the care that God has for us in Christ Jesus—tenderness and compassion. It's the attitude that God has toward us.

Romans 9:15 is a rendering of Exodus 33:19. "*I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.*" That term is *bowels of mercy*—b-o-w-e-l-s—bowels of mercy. The intestines are the place where our emotions affect us the most. We get knots in our stomachs.

Basically, what this is saying is that God is telling us, "I am moved in my eternal being for you." And that is demonstrated by His compassion and tenderness. This is the great basis of our salvation.

Take a look at Titus chapter 2, please. In part of chapter 1 and chapter 2, Paul says this. "*Declare these things. Exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.*"

And chapter 3. "*Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy to all people.*"

Now he describes seven virtues of living a life worthy of the gospel of Christ. If you want to see a description, look at these seven virtues in those two verses of Titus chapter 3—to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy to all people.

Take that to your office, men. Take those seven virtues. And make sure that you apply them in your lives through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And you'll be living a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Now there is a contrast in verse 3. There are seven vices that we have been set free from. Verse 3 begins seven vices. "*For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*" There are seven vices that have been removed because of the work of the Spirit of God in our salvation.

There's a contrast. Take a look at that contrast. Which one do you take to the office, men? Which one do you take to your homes? Paul is saying that these seven virtues need to replace those seven vices, replacing them because of our salvation.

And they are described in verse 4. "*But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Savior appeared.*" They're the same words. "*When the goodness and loving-*

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*kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured on us richly through Christ Jesus our Savior."*

See, that's the basis of God's salvation for us—His compassion and His tenderness. That's the attitude that He has toward you, to take away those seven vices and replace them with seven virtues, so that we become the means by which God is glorified by living a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ.

So notice that there were four *ifs*. Back to our passage in Philippians. Notice the next word. "*Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus.*"

Now what is it that makes Paul's joy complete? Notice verse 2. "*Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.*"

What makes your joy complete? Paul has just described what makes his joy complete. Let's examine that. It's not some physical pleasure that he would have, although that might be important to him. It's not some spiritual blessing that he might receive, although that might be an encouragement. He's basically saying this. What would give him the greatest joy and make his joy complete would be that the people of Philippi in the local church would become the kind of people that would make the gospel credible in that city. He wants the gospel to be credible in that city. That would be his great joy.

What's the difference between the pagan world and the people of God? The answer would be this. What do we joy in and what do we weep in? What do we take joy in? And when do you weep? When you see something happen, do you weep when you see Christ taken through the mud? Do you weep in that? What do you find joy in?

Paul is saying this. His great joy would be that the people in the church at Philippi would become like-minded, have the same mind, the same heart and the same will. If they would all have that, that would be his great joy, because that's how you can live a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ. The thing that Paul says would bring him the greatest joy, that would fill his cup with great joy, would be the unity of the people of God. That would be his great joy.

Look at verse 2. Be like-minded in three areas—being of the same mind; you're thinking the same thing. You have the same heart and passion. And you are one in spirit and purpose; you have the same will, where all minds are directed by the same truth. All hearts burn with the same affection. And where all wills bow to the same Lord, we will have unity in the church.

Now where do we find that to exist? Somebody says, "Well, I've never seen that." Men, I would offer for your consideration that that exists in the Godhead, in the Trinity. They exist in the same Mind, the same Heart, and the same Will. What the Father ordained, the Son accomplished and the Holy Spirit applies. We've been saying that for years. That's the model that we need to look at. If you want to see how that works, take a look at God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. They have the same mind. They have the same heart. And They have the same will.

What does it mean to be like-minded? Well, I'll offer you a couple considerations on this.

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To be like-minded means that we believe in *the sufficiency of Scripture*. We're like-minded; Scripture is our sufficiency.

Now we talk a lot about Scripture being our authority. But do we really believe that Scripture is our sufficiency, that it is sufficient for all aspects of our life? Do we believe that it's sufficient for how I respond to my boss? Is the Scripture sufficient enough to tell me how to do that when I'm in a difficult situation? That's the ministry in the marketplace. You see, the like-mindedness comes because of our commitment to the sufficiency of Scripture.

The heart—for the same flame, the same heart feeling. It's not my own glory, but the glory of Christ Jesus. That's the heart. The glory of Christ Jesus is the unifying heart element. Like-mindedness is the sufficiency of Scripture. The same love would be the glory of Christ. And to bow under the same leadership would be the Father's will.

There are two conditions for that to exist in the church: Scripture unity in the church and Christlike humility in the believer. Paul is saying that if you have Scripture unity in the church and Christlike humility in each believer, that would be his great joy.

Look at verse 3. "*Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*" Self-interest consumes our modern age, doesn't it? Verse 3 is totally foreign to the world.

What is it that builds the church, the local church? It's the deep-seated transformation of lives, living a life worthy of the gospel. That's what transforms the church. And men, we need to be like-minded, having the same heart and the same will. When that happens in the local church, we will make an impact for the glory of God. May it be so for His sake. Let's pray.

Father, it's not about me. It's really about You. It's not about what I do; it's about who You are. Father, it's not about our abilities; it's about Your resources. It's not about us. It's about Your love for us. Father, we just pray that You'd be pleased to take the truths that we've learned today through Your Holy Spirit and apply them to our lives. If I've said anything or done anything to interfere with the Holy Spirit's work in our lives individually, would You be pleased to remove that. And do it for Jesus' sake. And all the Brave Men said,

**Men:** Amen! (*Applause*)