

EXEGETICAL GUIDE



# Philippians 1:27–2:11



**BE UNITED  
IN CHRIST**

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*Exegetical Guide Philippians 1:27–2:11*

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# **Be United in Christ**

## **Exegetical Guide**

### **Philippians 1:27–2:11**

#### **Unity through the Gospel**

Christians are called to live worthily of the gospel. Unity is one attribute of a worthy life. Unity allows believers to stand against opposition, and seeking unity raises others up to a place of importance above self. But in the face of opposition, how can one keep focused on other believers and not retreat into selfishness?

The gospel story should be every believer's refuge from selfishness and encouragement toward God-honoring unity. Unity based on common interests, preferences, or season of life is common. But unity based on the self-sacrifice of Christ is rare. The gospel story of the Son of God serving man and being exalted both models what Christians' lives should look like and gives us hope for the future. It is the foundation for us to Be United in Christ.

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## HOW TO USE A BE UNITED IN CHRIST EXEGETICAL GUIDE

An exegetical guide models how to study a passage of Scripture. The Introduction provides the context, while **Connection to Be United in Christ** highlights the text's importance for Christian unity. The Passage presents the Biblical text being studied.

We begin by **Studying the Passage** because God's messengers must convey God's words accurately. The Passage Comparison presents the text in its original Greek or Hebrew alongside seven English translations. Comparing translations allows for a better understanding of the passage and provides insight into the intent of the original Biblical manuscripts. The Structural Layout divides the passage into its component parts, because to understand what God said we must understand how He said it. It is an essential step in Bible study, but do not be discouraged if this section seems unfamiliar or daunting. The Narrative Flow explains the Biblical author's flow of thought through the passage. The Passage Overview then presents a simple outline that will form the foundation of subsequent outlines and the sermon manuscript itself. The Passage Focus distills the text into a statement that will be the main idea of the sermon. We then identify several Resources to further your study.

Having studied the passage, we are ready to begin **Preparing the Sermon**. Good preaching feeds God's people on God's Word, so our messages must be both healthful and appetizing. This is why this section begins by laying out several Sermon Ingredients that will be used to prepare a nutritious and appealing message. We must present God's Word accurately and clearly so that God's people will understand it with their minds, embrace it in their hearts, and apply it to their lives. The Passage Outline presents the passage's structure and flow while the Passage Details provide the grammatical, historical, and theological information needed to understand and teach the passage. The message is then fortified with Applications and seasoned with Illustrations. These ingredients are combined to prepare a spiritual meal to feed God's children. The Sermon Outline rephrases the Passage Outline to make it more understandable to an audience. The Sermon Manuscript for Your Use then offers an example of how the passage might be preached. Then we identify several Sermon Examples that model good preaching on the text.

Thus, an exegetical guide presents both a comprehensive analysis of one particular Bible passage and a model for studying and preaching Scripture. We pray that God will use this guide to promote love for Him, fidelity to His Word, and unity in His church.

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## INTRODUCTION

The apostle Paul, while on his second missionary journey (AD 51–52), preached the gospel in Philippi, a key city in the Roman province of Macedonia. Several people came to faith, and a local church was established (Acts 16:11ff). However, strong opposition to the gospel forced Paul to leave Philippi after a short stay. In AD 56–57, he made a brief stop there during his third missionary journey (2 Corinthians 2:13; Acts 20:1–6), but he did not write his letter to the church for another five years.

In AD 61–62, Paul was imprisoned in Rome awaiting the outcome of his appeal to Caesar. When the Philippian Christians learned about Paul's situation, they sent gifts to Paul by way of Epaphroditus. During his stay, Epaphroditus became sick and almost died (Philippians 2:25–27). After he recovered, Paul sensed his desire to return home, which created an opportunity to have Paul's letter delivered.

Paul writes a warm, personal letter to his friends. He thanks them for their gifts and urges them to be unified, encouraging them in the face of opposition. Underlying the entire letter is the confidence that Jesus Christ is adequate to meet their needs and to bring about triumphant living.

After a brief thanksgiving and prayer (1:1–11), Paul explains how his imprisonment has advanced the gospel and how he is content whether he lives or dies (1:12–26). He then encourages them toward unity and perseverance by offering the example of Christ's life (1:27–2:11). Following this beautiful illustration of Jesus, he encourages them to live out their relationship with Christ to the world (2:12–18).

Paul then turns his attention to Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19–30). He explains how his past holds no benefit compared to knowing Christ, and he encourages the Philippians to stand firm in Christ alone (3:1–4:1). He again encourages unity (4:2–3) before calling the Philippians to rejoice, put aside worrying, and seek peace through setting their minds on beauty and truth (4:4–9). Paul thanks them for their gift, reminds them of the power of true contentment, and gives a final farewell (4:10–23).

## Connection to Be United in Christ

We often face opposition to our faith that can destroy our unity as God's family. But God's love for His people encourages us to love one another. Jesus' example of humble obedience reminds us that we, too, need to humble ourselves for the sake of others. The Spirit teaches us, despite our differences, that we are one body. When we apply these blessings to our lives, we can face opposition with joy and perseverance and truly Be United in Christ.

### PASSAGE: PHILIPPIANS 1:27–2:11

Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving 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. For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

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, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and 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. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in Heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> While there are many fine Bible translations, the New American Standard Bible (NASB) is used here for its consistent, word-for-word translation.





# STUDYING THE PASSAGE

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**Philippians 1:27–2:11**

**Unity Through the Gospel**

## PASSAGE COMPARISON

### Philippians 1:27–2:11

The Passage Comparison presents the original Greek text alongside seven English translations. Comparing translations allows for a better understanding of the passage and provides insight into the intent of the original Biblical manuscripts.

GREEK	NASB	ESV	KJV
<p><sup>27</sup> Μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε, ἵνα εἴτε ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν ὑμᾶς εἴτε ἀπὼν ἀκούω τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, ὅτι στήκετε ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ συναθροῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου</p>	<p><sup>27</sup> Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;</p>	<p><sup>27</sup> Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,</p>	<p><sup>27</sup> Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;</p>
<p><sup>28</sup> καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων, ἧτις ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἔνδειξις ἀπωλείας, ὑμῶν δὲ σωτηρίας, καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ θεοῦ·</p>	<p><sup>28</sup> in no way alarmed by <i>your</i> opponents—which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that <i>too</i>, from God.</p>	<p><sup>28</sup> and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.</p>	<p><sup>28</sup> And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.</p>
<p><sup>29</sup> ὅτι ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, οὐ μόνον τὸ εἰς αὐτὸν πιστεῦειν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ πάσχειν,</p>	<p><sup>29</sup> For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,</p>	<p><sup>29</sup> For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,</p>	<p><sup>29</sup> For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;</p>
<p><sup>30</sup> τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα ἔχοντες, οἷον εἶδετε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ νῦν ἀκούετε ἐν ἐμοί.</p>	<p><sup>30</sup> experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear <i>to be</i> in me.</p>	<p><sup>30</sup> engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.</p>	<p><sup>30</sup> Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear <i>to be</i> in me.</p>
<p><b>2:</b><sup>1</sup> Εἴ τις οὖν παράκλησις ἐν Χριστῷ, εἴ τι παραμύθιον ἀγάπης, εἴ τις κοινωνία πνεύματος, εἴ τις σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοί,</p>	<p><b>2:</b><sup>1</sup> 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,</p>	<p><b>2:</b><sup>1</sup> So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy,</p>	<p><b>2:</b><sup>1</sup> If <i>there be</i> therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,</p>

NKJV	NRSV	NIV	NLT
<p><sup>27</sup> Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,</p>	<p><sup>27</sup> Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel,</p>	<p><sup>27</sup> Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel</p>	<p><sup>27</sup> Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Then, whether I come and see you again or only hear about you, I will know that you are standing together with one spirit and one purpose, fighting together for the faith, which is the Good News.</p>
<p><sup>28</sup> and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.</p>	<p><sup>28</sup> and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing.</p>	<p><sup>28</sup> without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God.</p>	<p><sup>28</sup> Don't be intimidated in any way by your enemies. This will be a sign to them that they are going to be destroyed, but that you are going to be saved, even by God himself.</p>
<p><sup>29</sup> For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,</p>	<p><sup>29</sup> For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—</p>	<p><sup>29</sup> For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him,</p>	<p><sup>29</sup> For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him.</p>
<p><sup>30</sup> having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear <i>is</i> in me.</p>	<p><sup>30</sup> since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.</p>	<p><sup>30</sup> since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.</p>	<p><sup>30</sup> We are in this struggle together. You have seen my struggle in the past, and you know that I am still in the midst of it.</p>
<p><b>2:1</b> Therefore if <i>there is</i> any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,</p>	<p><b>2:1</b> If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy,</p>	<p><b>2:1</b> Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,</p>	<p><b>2:1</b> Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate?</p>

GREEK	NASB	ESV	KJV
<sup>2</sup> πληρώσατέ μου τὴν χαρὰν ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε, τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες, σύμψυχοι, τὸ ἐν φρονουῦντες,	<sup>2</sup> make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.	<sup>2</sup> complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.	<sup>2</sup> Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, <i>being</i> of one accord, of one mind.
<sup>3</sup> μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθείαν μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν ἀλλὰ τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ ἀλλήλους ἠγούμενοι ὑπερέχοντας ἑαυτῶν,	<sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;	<sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.	<sup>3</sup> <i>Let nothing be done</i> through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.
<sup>4</sup> μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες ἀλλὰ [καὶ] τὰ ἑτέρων ἕκαστοι.	<sup>4</sup> do not <i>merely</i> look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.	<sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.	<sup>4</sup> Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.
<sup>5</sup> Τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὁ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,	<sup>5</sup> Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,	<sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,	<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:
<sup>6</sup> ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,	<sup>6</sup> who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,	<sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,	<sup>6</sup> Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:
<sup>7</sup> ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος	<sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, <i>and</i> being made in the likeness of men.	<sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.	<sup>7</sup> But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:
<sup>8</sup> ἐταπεινώσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ.	<sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.	<sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.	<sup>8</sup> And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
<sup>9</sup> διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα,	<sup>9</sup> For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,	<sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,	<sup>9</sup> Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:
<sup>10</sup> ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων	<sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,	<sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,	<sup>10</sup> That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of <i>things</i> in heaven, and <i>things</i> in earth, and <i>things</i> under the earth;
<sup>11</sup> καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς.	<sup>11</sup> and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.	<sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.	<sup>11</sup> And <i>that</i> every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ <i>is</i> Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

NKJV	NRSV	NIV	NLT
<sup>2</sup> fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, <i>being</i> of one accord, of one mind.	<sup>2</sup> make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.	<sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.	<sup>2</sup> Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.
<sup>3</sup> Let nothing <i>be done</i> through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.	<sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves.	<sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,	<sup>3</sup> Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.
<sup>4</sup> Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.	<sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.	<sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.	<sup>4</sup> Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.
<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,	<sup>5</sup> Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,	<sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:	<sup>5</sup> You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.
<sup>6</sup> who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,	<sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,	<sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;	<sup>6</sup> Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to.
<sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, <i>and</i> coming in the likeness of men.	<sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form,	<sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.	<sup>7</sup> Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form,
<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to <i>the point of death</i> , even the death of the cross.	<sup>8</sup> he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.	<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!	<sup>8</sup> he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.
<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,	<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,	<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,	<sup>9</sup> Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names,
<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,	<sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,	<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,	<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
<sup>11</sup> and <i>that</i> every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ <i>is</i> Lord, to the glory of God the Father.	<sup>11</sup> and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.	<sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.	<sup>11</sup> and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

## STRUCTURAL LAYOUT

The Structural Layout shows how the passage fits together. The left column contains the Biblical text divided into its structural elements. Main clauses are aligned left and related elements are highlighted in color. The right column explains how the various elements function in context.

27	<p>Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ,.....</p> <p>so that</p> <p>whether I come and see you or remain absent,.....</p> <p>I will hear of you that you are</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">standing firm in <b>one spirit</b>,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">with <b>one mind</b> striving together for the</p>	<p>This is the main clause and command of the first section of the passage.</p> <p>These clauses explain the condition of Paul’s expectations.</p>
28	<p>faith of the gospel;</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">in <b>no way</b> alarmed by your opponents— .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">which is a sign</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">of destruction for them, but</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">of salvation for you, .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">and that too, from God.....</p>	<p>These three clauses explain the results of the Philippians’ worthy conduct.</p> <p>This clause explains what the three previous clauses communicate to their opponents and to themselves.</p> <p>This phrase gives the source of their salvation.</p>
29	<p>For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake,.....</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">not only to believe in Him,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">but also to suffer for His sake, .....</p>	<p>This clause explains why they are suffering.</p> <p>These two clauses illustrate that belief and suffering go together.</p>
30	<p>experiencing the same conflict</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">which you saw in me, and</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">now hear to be in me.....</p>	<p>These clauses explain the common theme of suffering among believers.</p>
1	<p>Therefore .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">if there is any <b>encouragement</b> in Christ,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">if there is any <b>consolation</b> of love,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">if there is any <b>fellowship</b> of the Spirit,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">if any <b>affection and compassion</b>, .....</p>	<p>“Therefore” introduces the second section of the passage and ties it to verses 27–30.</p> <p>These four clauses state the condition of Paul’s next command.</p>
2	<p>make my joy complete .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">by being of the <b>same mind</b>,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">maintaining the <b>same love</b>,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>united in spirit</b>,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">intent on <b>one purpose</b>.....</p>	<p>This is the main verb of the second section and the expected result of the four “if” clauses.</p> <p>These four clauses show how the Philippians will complete Paul’s joy.</p>
3	<p>Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but.....</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">with humility of mind .....</p>	<p>This clause provides a negative example of what leads to unity.</p> <p>This phrase gives the condition of the following example.</p>
4	<p>regard one another as more important than yourselves;</p> <p>do not merely look out for your own personal interests,</p> <p>but also for the interests of others. ....</p>	<p>These clauses provide positive examples of what leads to unity.</p>

5	Have this attitude in yourselves .....	This final command contains the main verb for the last section of the passage.
	which was also in Christ Jesus, .....	This clause illustrates whose attitude they should seek to model.
6	who, .....	This word introduces the explanation of Jesus as the example for the Philippians.
	although He existed in the <b>form of God</b> , .....	This clause states the condition of Christ's nature and subsequent choices.
	did not regard <b>equality with God</b> a thing to be grasped,	These two clauses explain Christ's actions despite His divine nature.
7	but <b>emptied</b> Himself, .....	These two clauses explain what "emptied Himself" looked like.
	taking the form of a bond-servant,	These two clauses explain what "emptied Himself" looked like.
	and being made in the <b>likeness of men</b> .....	These two clauses explain what "emptied Himself" looked like.
8	Being found in <b>appearance as a man</b> , .....	This clause restates the previous clause while introducing the next action of Christ.
	He <b>humbled</b> Himself.....	This clause adds the third action of Jesus.
	by becoming obedient to the point of death, .....	This clause explains how He humbled Himself.
	even death on a cross.....	This phrase gives the extent of His obedience.
9	For this reason also, God highly <b>exalted</b> Him, and <b>bestowed</b> on Him the name which is above every name, .....	These two clauses explain the result of Christ's humility.
10	so that at the name of Jesus every knee <b>will bow</b> , .....	This clause is one result of God conferring the name.
	of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,.....	These phrases describe who will bow to Jesus.
11	and that every tongue <b>will confess</b> .....	This clause is the result of God bestowing the name.
	that <b>Jesus Christ is Lord</b> ,.....	This phrase is the content of the confession.
	to the glory of God the Father. ....	This phrase is the result of the confession.



## NARRATIVE FLOW

The apostle Paul encourages the Philippians to live worthily of the gospel and to be united in living out their faith (v. 27). He tells them to expect opposition as a normal part of the Christian life but not to be alarmed, because God has granted them salvation (vv. 28–30).

Paul reminds them of what they have received from God (v. 1), and he charges them to respond by completing his joy through their unity (v. 2). He gives several examples of actions they can take that will lead to unity (vv. 3–4).

Paul encourages them to model their attitudes after the gospel story of Christ (v. 5). Despite His godly nature, Jesus humbly became a man. In obedience to His Father, He was willing to die (vv. 6–8). The result of Jesus' obedience was His exaltation by the Father, humanity's worship, and proclamation of His rightful title (vv. 9–11).

## PASSAGE OVERVIEW

Philippians 1:27–2:11 has three main sections:

- I. CHRISTIANS MUST WALK WORTHILY OF THE GOSPEL (1:27–30)**
- II. CHRISTIAN UNITY IS BASED ON GODLY ENCOURAGEMENT (2:1–4)**
- III. CHRISTIAN UNITY MODELS ITSELF ON THE GOSPEL (2:5–11)**

## PASSAGE FOCUS

Christians live unified lives worthy of the gospel based on God's encouragement and Christ's example.

# RESOURCES

## Basic Resources

Motyer, J. A. *The Message of Philippians*. The Bible Speaks Today. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984.

MacArthur, John F. *Philippians*. The MacArthur New Testament Commentary. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2001.

## Intermediate Resources

Fee, Gordon. *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.

Thielman, Frank. *Philippians*. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.

## Advanced Resources

Hawthorne, Gerald F., and Ralph P. Martin. *Philippians*. Rev. ed. Word Biblical Commentary. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004.

Silva, Moisés. *Philippians*. 2nd. ed. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005.



# PREPARING THE SERMON

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**Philippians 1:27–2:11**

**Unity through the Gospel**

# SERMON INGREDIENTS

## Philippians 1:27–2:11

### PASSAGE OUTLINE

#### **I. CHRISTIANS MUST WALK WORTHILY OF THE GOSPEL (1:27–30)**

- A. Living a worthy life should not depend on circumstances (1:27a)
  - 1. The gospel is worthy to live for
  - 2. A leader's presence or absence should not affect how one lives
- B. Unity has a power, demands a response, and sees a purpose (1:27b)
  - 1. Standing firm in the Spirit is the believer's power
  - 2. Striving for unity is the believer's response
  - 3. Uniting around a common faith is the believer's purpose
- C. Unity stands against opposition (1:28–30)
  - 1. United believers should not fear opposition
  - 2. United believers know that opposition accompanies true faith

#### **II. CHRISTIAN UNITY IS BASED ON GODLY ENCOURAGEMENT (2:1–4)**

- A. The Godhead encourages believers (2:1)
  - 1. Christ encourages believers
  - 2. The Father loves believers
  - 3. The Spirit unites believers
- B. Encouraged believers maintain unity (2:2)
  - 1. Believers strive for a unity of mind and will
  - 2. Believers strive to maintain God's love
  - 3. Believers strive to maintain a united purpose
- C. Unity elevates others above self (2:3–4)
  - 1. Believers should never act selfishly
  - 2. Believers view other believers as more important than self

#### **III. CHRISTIAN UNITY MODELS ITSELF ON THE GOSPEL (2:5–11)**

- A. Despite Jesus' divine nature, He did not take advantage of His position (2:5–6)
- B. Jesus emptied Himself by becoming a man (2:7)
- C. Jesus humbled Himself through obedience (2:8)
- D. Jesus will be exalted above all (2:9–11)

### Philippians 1:27

#### **Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ,**

“Conduct yourselves” is a word that metaphorically means “live.”<sup>2</sup> But usually when Paul wants to metaphorically say “live,” he uses the Greek word for “walk” (see Philippians 3:17 NIV). Here, however, he uses a word that means “to be a citizen.”<sup>3</sup> Paul could be referring to their Roman or their heavenly citizenship.

Regardless of their citizenship, they are to live lives “worthy of the gospel.” This phrase comes at the beginning of the sentence in the Greek to emphasize its importance. The gospel determines how they are to behave. Paul does not want them to take pride in their Roman citizenship, which Philippian citizens were known to do.<sup>4</sup> Instead, the gospel dictates how they should live.

This “gospel” is “of Christ.” The good news is about Jesus. The rest of the passage builds to the example of Christ and His willingness to embrace the cross. It is clear from the rest of the passage that the gospel is not just a fact to know, but it also demands a response.

#### **so that whether I come and see you or remain absent,**

Living a worthy life should not depend on whether Paul is present. This point is brought up again in 2:12, where Paul talks about their obedience in his absence. The Philippians aren’t to do what they do because of Paul or anyone else but because of Christ.

#### **I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together**

The structure of this statement highlights the unity Paul is seeking. The focus (the middle two lines) is on unity:

“standing firm

in one spirit

with one mind

striving together.”<sup>5</sup>

“Standing firm” can mean simply “to stand” but is used metaphorically in this verse to mean “be firmly committed in conviction or belief.”<sup>6</sup> Paul uses this word in Galatians 5:1 to encourage the Galatians to hold firmly to their faith in Christ and not abandon it for salvation through the Law. Here, Paul wants to know that the Philippians are not wavering in their unity.

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<sup>2</sup> Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, rev. and ed. Fredrick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 846. This important reference work is the standard dictionary of New Testament Greek and is commonly referred to as BDAG after its four editors.

<sup>3</sup> BDAG, 846.

<sup>4</sup> Gordon Fee, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 162.

<sup>5</sup> Moisés Silva, *Philippians*, 2nd ed., Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 82.

<sup>6</sup> BDAG, 944.

“In one spirit” likely refers to the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> This phrase refers to the power in which the Philippians stand together so they can function as one body. Believers strive toward unity as they stand firm in the empowerment of the Spirit.

“With one mind” describes “oneness or unity between two or more people.”<sup>8</sup> The Philippians are to be “striving together.” The Greek word for “striving together” occurs twice in the New Testament (Philippians 1:27; 4:3). The other occurrence also follows the verb “stand” (4:1) and refers to the need for unity. It means “to struggle along with someone.”<sup>9</sup>

### **for the faith of the gospel;**

The purpose of standing and striving together is for “the faith of the gospel.” This phrase only occurs here in the New Testament and means the content of what is believed, not belief itself. One might translate it either “the faith brought about by the gospel”<sup>10</sup> or “the faith that is contained in the gospel.”<sup>11</sup>

### **Philippians 1:28**

#### **in no way alarmed by your opponents—**

“Alarmed” means “to let oneself be intimidated.”<sup>12</sup> Fear can cause men to scatter and flee. Paul wants the Philippians to remain united against any opposition. His earlier reminder, that “to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21), is part of the foundation for this statement, which is highlighted in the next part of the verse. Paul knows there is courage and strength in unity.

#### **which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God.**

“Which” most likely refers to the Philippians’ standing firm, striving together, and not being alarmed. Being united together and not intimidated despite opposition serves as a double sign.

First, for those opposed to the true gospel, unity and lack of fear are a sign of destruction. Being opposed to the true gospel is always condemned in Scripture. Paul told the Galatians that if anyone preached a different gospel he was to be accursed (Galatians 1:9).

Second, for those united together in the true gospel, opposition is a sign of salvation. It is as Jesus said, “In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Perseverance in the face of opposition is a mark of true faith. Inauthentic faith will not endure long under harsh treatment.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> There is a debate among scholars about whether “in one spirit” should be written “in one Spirit.” Some argue that Paul is using “spirit” to mean “community spirit.” Since the phrase occurs next to “with one mind,” it must refer not to God’s spirit but man’s. They maintain that Paul is repeating, for emphasis, the need for the Philippians to function as one body. See Fee, 163–166; Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians*, rev. ed., World Biblical Commentary (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 70; Frank Thielman, *Philippians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 93.

<sup>8</sup> Fee, 164.

<sup>9</sup> BDAG, 964.

<sup>10</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 71.

<sup>11</sup> Fee, 167.

<sup>12</sup> BDAG, 895.

<sup>13</sup> Thielman, 101.

## Philippians 1:29

**For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,**

After dealing with the reality of their suffering, Paul offers an explanation for it. Suffering is seen as a positive thing when done for “Christ’s sake” because “suffering provides clarity about who stands with God and who does not.”<sup>14</sup> Christians can look upon it not with dread but with confidence. Paul will expand on this idea in Philippians 3:10 where he wants to “know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.” Suffering goes hand in hand with belief. “All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Timothy 3:12). Our suffering is a visible testimony to the world of our union with Christ.

“To grant” means “to give graciously.”<sup>15</sup> Another possible translation is, “For God has graciously given you the privilege both of believing in Christ and of suffering in His [place].”<sup>16</sup> Both belief and suffering are gracious gifts given to believers for Jesus’ sake. While suffering might not seem like a gift, Paul will show clearly in the coming verses how suffering brings honor to Christ and causes us to shine as “lights in the world” (Philippians 2:15).

## Philippians 1:30

**experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.**

“The same conflict” highlights the unity that exists not only among the Philippians but also between them and Paul. They are in this fight together and can take courage from Paul, who is also undergoing opposition. His unwavering faith supports their faith.

“Now hear to be in me” refers to Paul’s current imprisonment, which he has already written about in 1:12–20.

## Philippians 2:1–4

The point of the next four verses is well articulated by Hawthorne and Martin:

“Unity dominates the thinking of the apostle in this section.... He uses words big in meaning, compacted into brief verbless phrases, rare words, and words never found anywhere else in the New Testament. He piles clause on top of clause, beginning each clause with the same word. He does all this as if searching for ways to make his readers think and feel deeply about the essential nature of harmony and its necessity within the Christian community.”<sup>17</sup>

There is debate on how the four verses fit together, but the general consensus among scholars is that the outline begins in verse 1 with four “if” clauses. Verse 2 follows with the understood “then” clause: “make my joy complete,” followed by numerous phrases that show what this looks like.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Thielman, 101.

<sup>15</sup> BDAG, 1078.

<sup>16</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 75.

<sup>17</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 81.

<sup>18</sup> Fee believes the tone is not so much an if/then argument but a “since these things are true, this is how you should act” statement. Fee, 177; see also Hawthorne and Martin, 82.



### **Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ,**

“Therefore” joins this section to the preceding verses in the passage. Paul is not finished talking about unity among believers. The foundation of unity is “essential for Christian community and for an effective effort to defend the gospel.”<sup>19</sup>

“Encouragement” means either an “act of emboldening another in belief or course of action” or “lifting of another’s spirits.”<sup>20</sup> Paul assumes they have received this encouragement by being in Christ. This encouragement stands in opposition to the suffering they also experience for Christ.

It is clear that the source of the “encouragement” is from their relationship with Christ, but there is uncertainty about the source of “consolation,” “fellowship,” and “affection and compassion.” Are they from God as well? Or are they from the Philippians’ unity or from the Philippians’ relationship with Paul? This highly emotional appeal leads to some ambiguity, but the point should not be lost in deciphering the details: their relationship with Christ and other believers should have a positive bearing on how they live out Christian unity.<sup>21</sup>

### **if there is any consolation of love,**

“Consolation” means “that which offers encouragement, especially as consolation, means of consolation, alleviation.”<sup>22</sup> Love, especially from God but also from others, provides relief from hardship and opposition. This is why it is important for believers to come alongside those in suffering. They offer a physical example of consolation, and they also can point to God’s steadfast love for His children.

### **if there is any fellowship of the Spirit,**

In 1:27 they were “standing firm in one spirit.” Now the Spirit is the source of their fellowship. Paul continues to remind them of how it is they remain united. It is the Spirit that both begins their fellowship by uniting them as brothers and sisters in Christ and empowers their fellowship as He continues to conform them to the image of Christ.

### **if any affection and compassion,**

“Affection” literally means “the inward parts of a body,”<sup>23</sup> but it is used here metaphorically. In the ancient world the inward parts were the source of one’s deep feelings.<sup>24</sup> Paul is not trying to encourage them to some action based on whether they simply like each other or not. He is reminding them of the deep care they have for one another in hopes that this will stir them on to greater unity. Some scholars take affection and compassion together to indicate a “heart of pity”<sup>25</sup> or “heartfelt sympathy.”<sup>26</sup>

These are the only two words in this verse that don’t have a qualifier like the other clauses in verse 1. Regardless of the source of this “affection and compassion,” whether from Christ or Paul or one another, Paul expects it, along with the other encouragements from verse 1, to move them to action.

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<sup>19</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 81.

<sup>20</sup> BDAG, 766.

<sup>21</sup> Fee, 180–181.

<sup>22</sup> BDAG, 769.

<sup>23</sup> BDAG, 938.

<sup>24</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 84.

<sup>25</sup> Fee, 182n44.

<sup>26</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 85.

## Philippians 2:2

**make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.**

“Complete” is the only main verb through verse 4. Paul has already stated his joy in praying for the Philippians (1:4). He has also stated that he rejoices in the spread of the gospel (1:18). Now he tells them that they can complete his joy by responding with unity to what they have experienced in the Christian life.

Even though “complete” is the main verb, it is not the main point of this verse or the next two. Unity is foremost on Paul’s mind, and he highlights this with a series of clauses that emphasize this truth.

“Being of the same mind” could also be translated as a command. Regardless, the idea remains that this is the intended result of 2:1. Literally, the phrase reads, “that you think the same thing.” The verb, which will be used again in verse 5, means more than to think in the sense of knowledge; Paul is “asking for a total inward attitude of mind and disposition of will that strives after that one thing that is greater than any human truth.”<sup>27</sup>

“Maintaining the same love” probably refers back to the love (of the Father) Paul highlighted in verse 1. The Philippians are to strive to have that same kind of love for one another.

“United in spirit” is literally “together in soul”<sup>28</sup> and occurs only here in the New Testament. It could be translated as “acting together as one person.”<sup>29</sup> Paul then repeats the verb that was translated “being of the same mind.” These last two phrases are often thought to be closely linked and have the idea of being united in “spirit and purpose.”<sup>30</sup>

## Philippians 2:3

**Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit,**

While verse 2 is rather abstract, verse 3 is where Paul speaks about unity in practical terms. He tells them both how they should respond to one another and how they should not. There is no main verb in this clause; the “do” is supplied in English for clarity.

By “selfishness” Paul means “selfish ambition”<sup>31</sup> or “spirit of rivalry.”<sup>32</sup>

“Empty conceit” means “vain or exaggerated self-evaluation.”<sup>33</sup> The Christian life is not to be lived in a self-focused way, especially at the expense of someone else.

**but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;**

Just because the Philippians have received much from God doesn’t mean they can focus on themselves at the expense of others. Instead, humility should define their relationships. In the ancient world,

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<sup>27</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 86.

<sup>28</sup> Fee, 185.

<sup>29</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 86.

<sup>30</sup> Thielman, 102.

<sup>31</sup> BDAG, 392. See also the discussion in Fee, 121, 186.

<sup>32</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 87.

<sup>33</sup> BDAG, 538.

humility was not a virtue. However, in the church, it is indispensable to unity. There can be no unity when believers seek their own advantage.

Instead the Christians in Philippi are to think about others as “surpass[ing themselves] in quality or value,”<sup>34</sup> which is the meaning of the phrase “more important.” This clause describes what humility really means. To “regard” means to have a “consciously sure judgment resting on carefully weighed facts.”<sup>35</sup> The foundation of their humble treatment of one another is Christ’s treatment of them, which Paul will write about in verses 5–8.

## Philippians 2:4

**do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.**

It is not just that believers are to regard others as superior to themselves; they actually are to care for them as if this is so. Believers are not to be self-absorbed. Instead we are to pay careful attention to others in the body of Christ. We need to spend time with them to get to know them and their needs so we can love them well.

## Philippians 2:5

**Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,**

Verse 5 begins Paul’s example of Christ that the Philippians are to follow. “Have this attitude” uses the same verb that was used twice in verse 2. In other words, Paul is saying that this attitude he has been encouraging the Philippians to have is exactly the attitude that Jesus had. He is not calling them to anything that their Savior has not already modeled for them.

## Philippians 2:6

Philippians 2:6–11 is often described as an early hymn to Christ. This passage is a clear and beautiful presentation of the gospel story from Jesus’ incarnation to the cross.<sup>36</sup> So when Paul says “conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel” in 1:27, he means for them to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of what he is about to describe.

**who, although He existed in the form of God,**

Paul begins his description of Christ before the incarnation. While “form” usually refers to “outward appearance, shape,”<sup>37</sup> God is Spirit, and so “form” can’t mean shape. The meaning does become clear in the next clause and the following verses.

**did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,**

“Equality” means “pertaining to being equivalent in number, size, quality, equal.”<sup>38</sup> The meaning of this phrase, then, shines light on “form of God.” The natural reading of this text implies that Paul means the same thing by both phrases. Thus, Christ had the same quality as God and yet did not

<sup>34</sup> BDAG, 1033.

<sup>35</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 88.

<sup>36</sup> See the discussion about the origin of these verses in Fee, 191–197; Hawthorne and Martin, 99–104; Silva, 92–93; Thielman, 109–115.

<sup>37</sup> BDAG, 659.

<sup>38</sup> BDAG, 480.

think that this was something to “claim or assert title [to] by gripping or grasping.”<sup>39</sup> In other words, Christ’s equality with God “did *not* mean for Christ to be a ‘grasping, seizing’ being, as it would for ‘gods’ and ‘lords’ whom the Philippians had previously known; it was not ‘something to be seized upon to his own advantage,’ which would be the normal expectation of lordly power—and the nadir [lowest point] of selfishness.”<sup>40</sup>

## Philippians 2:7

**but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.**

“Emptied” means “to make empty ... of position or prestige.”<sup>41</sup> The meaning here is also much disputed.<sup>42</sup> This does not mean that Christ gave up His divine nature. In fact, since there is no object from which He emptied Himself, the idea is that He “poured Himself out.”<sup>43</sup> “Himself” implies that this action was voluntary, not forced upon Him.<sup>44</sup>

“The form of a bond-servant” adds further light to “form of God.” Since man, in whatever position he finds himself, is still man in form and shape, Paul must mean something else here. It is the nature of a servant that Paul is referring to as opposed to His divine nature.

“Being made in the likeness of men” moves the passage fully into the incarnation. The word “likeness” means “state of having common experiences,” but “[i]n light of what Paul says about Jesus in general it is probable that he uses our word to bring out both that Jesus in His earthly career was similar to sinful humans and yet not totally like them.”<sup>45</sup>

## Philippians 2:8

**Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**

“Appearance” means “outward appearance.”<sup>46</sup> This sets up a contrast to verses 6–7. “‘In the form of God’ He emptied Himself; now ‘in the appearance of a human being’ He humbled Himself.”<sup>47</sup> This humility takes the form of obedience.

Paul is going to call the Philippians to obey in 2:12, and he has already charged them with maintaining unity and steadfastness in the face of opposition. Now he gives the example of Christ’s obedience in the face of death as both an encouragement to them and the ground for their obedience. Christ did not take advantage of His divine nature to avoid suffering—even ultimate suffering.

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<sup>39</sup> BDAG, 133; for a discussion on the other ways “grasped” has been understood, see Fee, 205–208; Hawthorne and Martin, 115–116; Silva, 102–104.

<sup>40</sup> Fee, 208.

<sup>41</sup> BDAG, 539.

<sup>42</sup> For a discussion of “emptied” (Gk., *kenosis*), see Fee, 210; Hawthorne and Martin, 116–117, 121; Silva, 104–105; Thielman, 116–117.

<sup>43</sup> Fee, 210; see also 1 Corinthians 1:17 and Romans 4:14 for similar usages.

<sup>44</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 117.

<sup>45</sup> BDAG, 707.

<sup>46</sup> BDAG, 981.

<sup>47</sup> Fee, 215.

## Philippians 2:9

**For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,**

“For this reason” implies that what Paul is about to say is the “natural or logical outcome of His humility.”<sup>48</sup> This is now the end of the gospel story that Paul has been describing since verse 6.

“Exalted” means “to raise to a high point of honor.”<sup>49</sup> Christ’s exaltation by God is not a comparison to what the Son of God was before He emptied Himself. Instead, it is a vindication, “affirming that Christ’s self-emptying and death by crucifixion revealed true equality with God.”<sup>50</sup> The word is used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament in Psalm 97:9 to describe God as “exalted far above all gods.”

A “name” is closely associated with one’s reputation and character.<sup>51</sup> It can also be associated with authority.<sup>52</sup> While both of those ideas might be in play here, Paul says that God “bestowed” (which means “give[s] graciously”)<sup>53</sup> “on Him *the* name which is above every name.” Paul seems to be referring to a specific name. If the name is “Jesus” from verse 10, he doesn’t mean God has now given Him that name (clearly this is not the case) but that God has given this name an exalted place above all others. If the name is “Lord” from verse 11, Paul means that God is “bestowing on Him the name ‘Lord,’ as the equivalent of Yahweh.”<sup>54</sup> The Isaiah quote (Isaiah 45:23) in verse 10 below favors the second option.

## Philippians 2:10

**so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in Heaven and on earth and under the earth,**

Paul now quotes from Isaiah 45:23, and there seems little doubt that he is referring to Jesus as Yahweh. In Isaiah 45:21, God says, “Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none except Me.” The word “LORD” is Yahweh and is the one to whom “every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance” (Isaiah 45:23). Everyone, from the dead to the living, will one day “bow” to Him, “acknowledging ... His lordship and right to rule.”<sup>55</sup>

“Under the earth” refers, probably, to those who are dead and who will be raised and acknowledge Christ’s lordship. The phrase “in Heaven and on earth and under the earth” shows Christ’s lordship over all of creation.

<sup>48</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 124.

<sup>49</sup> BDAG, 1034.

<sup>50</sup> Fee, 219; see also 220.

<sup>51</sup> Note Ezekiel 36:22–23 where God charges Israel with profaning His name—and thus character—by their actions.

<sup>52</sup> Note John 16:23 where Jesus encourages His followers to ask in His name, by which He means His authority or position.

<sup>53</sup> BDAG, 1078.

<sup>54</sup> Fee, 222.

<sup>55</sup> Hawthorne and Martin, 127.

**and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

This is the second half of the Isaiah 45:23 quote. It is not just that people will acknowledge His lordship through a physical act, but they will also audibly proclaim Jesus' lordship. Even those who rejected Him in life will be forced to proclaim that they were wrong. All of this will bring glory to the Father.

In verse 6, Jesus was in “the form of God” and had “equality with God.” Now Paul relates how all will acknowledge what has been true all along: a full confirmation of the lordship of Christ as an encouragement to the Philippian believers to continue to stand united in the face of opposition. They are on the right side. One day their enemies will confess that they were wrong. The Philippians' perseverance will be justified. God will be glorified.

## APPLICATIONS

- Believers must base their unity on the gospel of Jesus Christ. No other foundation has the power to create, empower, or maintain Christian unity.
- Christians must expect but not fear opposition. Opposition to the gospel goes hand in hand with belief in the gospel. Since the best way to stand against opposition is to stand together, Christians must maintain unity.
- We must know that we worship a God who is Father, Son, and Spirit so that we look to each person of the Godhead for help in our unity. God's love should remind us of our need to love one another. Christ's sacrificial humility should remind us to put others first. The Spirit's empowerment should remind us that we don't manufacture unity by our own strength.
- All humanity will one day declare Christ to be Lord of all. As Christians, we should be a preview of the coming attraction of Christ's return. Our lives should be lived in such a way that we bring honor and glory to the Son of God in all we do, especially in how we relate to and serve one another.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

- From sports to business, good coaches and managers hope that the people who work under them will learn well and go on to have success of their own. By modeling the right characteristics and mentoring others, leaders will raise up other men and women to achieve the same results.
- It is easy to get lost while hiking in the woods. That is why hiking trails have markings on trees periodically to indicate to hikers that they are still following the trail. A firm understanding of the gospel is like a marker on a tree helping us know we are still on the right path.
- *The Red Badge of Courage* is a war story in which the main character flees from the heat of battle when he sees others fleeing as well. Not being encouraged by his military unit to stay and fight gives him permission to abandon his friends.<sup>56</sup> In the face of opposition, he sees no unified force standing firm against the enemy.

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<sup>56</sup> Stephen Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage* (New York, NY: Dover, 1990), 30.

# SERMON OUTLINE

## Unity through the Gospel (Philippians 1:27–2:11)

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. WALK WORTHILY OF THE GOSPEL (1:27–30)

- A. You know the gospel; now live it (v. 27a)
- B. Stand firm in the Spirit and strive for unity (v. 27b)
- C. Expect but don't fear opposition (vv. 28–30)

#### II. RESPOND RIGHTLY TO GOD (2:1–4)

- A. Rest in God's encouragement (v. 1)
- B. Strive for unity (v. 2)
- C. Put others first (vv. 3–4)

#### III. LOOK LONGINGLY AT THE SAVIOR (2:5–11)

- A. Model Christ's humility (vv. 5–7)
- B. Model Christ's obedience (v. 8)
- C. Worship Christ's majesty (vv. 9–11)

### CONCLUSION



# SERMON MANUSCRIPT FOR YOUR USE

## The Cross: Unity's Example (Philippians 1:27–2:11)

### INTRODUCTION

When I was seven, I bought a “diamond” necklace as a Christmas present for a girl I liked. Being seven, I had no ability to distinguish between real and fake, and the necklace that was beautiful to me was, in fact, nothing more than cheap plastic. Most children can't tell the difference between imitation and the real thing. They can't distinguish between something that is mass produced and something that is custom made. As a seven year old, I still saw beauty in a cheap piece of costume jewelry. Fortunately, so did she.

As we grow older, we gain a better understanding of worth and can better discern what is cheap versus valuable. While you and I may come to better understand the value of a dollar or distinguish between a cheap and valuable object, we still struggle to accurately assign value to people. We may believe that property gives someone worth or status. We believe that someone's profession and clothing, the way they talk, or even the color of their skin elevates or lowers their status. We struggle to look past the externals and often fail to see people as those who bear God's image. We struggle to see people as God sees them and to love them as God loves them.

We have the same trouble seeing ourselves clearly. We constantly feel the need to add things to our lives that will increase our worth in the eyes of others, to make us feel better about ourselves. Then we chase after what we believe will accomplish this end. The Bible has a word for this elusive thing we strive for: glory. It comes from a word that means “heavy” or “weighty,” and it was used in the Roman world to note someone's status. You and I are chasing glory.

Ultimately this leads to disunity as we all seek to find more and more glory, usually at the expense of others. Life becomes a fierce competition to be noticed, and we are all striving for recognition. We are all chasing the same thing. In our passage, the apostle Paul is going to describe what we chase by using the words “empty conceit.” It could also be translated as “empty glory.” Of course, nothing we chase to elevate our status ultimately brings us glory or satisfaction.

Fortunately, Paul shows us a better way. It is the way of Christ. The one who was, and is, the glorious one. The one who, instead of chasing glory, humbled Himself and went to the cross for us. Paul wants us to model our lives after Jesus. When we do, when Christ is the example we chase, we will find that this promotes unity as we elevate others above ourselves.

### I. WALK WORTHILY OF THE GOSPEL (1:27–30)

#### A. You know the gospel; now live it (v. 27a)

##### **Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ,**

What does it mean to live in a manner worthy of the gospel? To answer that question, we must define “gospel.” According to Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, the gospel is the glorious truth that Christ died for our sins and rose again. So we are to live in a way that is worthy of our Lord and Savior's sacrificial death and resurrection. On the surface, that may seem like an impossible task. As we move forward in the passage, we will see Paul develop principles from the gospel and apply them to the Philippians' situation. Before he arrives at the specific example of the gospel, though, he makes three points for them to consider.

First, when Paul says, “conduct yourselves,” he is using a word that means to live as a citizen. The Philippians would have understood this phrase to mean that the community was observing their behavior. In other words, they should not behave as if they were behind closed doors. In the same way, you and I live our lives in public, and we should live before everyone in a way that is worthy of the gospel, worthy of Christ’s death. We know the truth, and Paul expects us to live in light of that truth.

### **B. Stand firm in the Spirit and strive for unity (v. 27b)**

**so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;**

Second, Paul encourages them to stand firm in one spirit. Is this the Holy Spirit, as some scholars suggest, or is it referring to the spirit of brotherhood in Christ? If it is the first, Paul is saying that believers can only strive toward unity if they are standing together in the power that God provides through His Spirit. Christian unity is a supernatural reality; it is not man-made. Unless we are standing firm in God the Spirit, all our striving for unity will be in vain.

If it is the second, Paul is reinforcing our need to actively be involved in maintaining unity. We are to stand firm and strive together for the faith of the gospel. Regardless of which side is correct, the point Paul is making is clear. We are to be unified in the content of what we believe (“the faith of the gospel”) and in our actions as we live out our faith. Walking in a manner worthy of the gospel means we are united in our understanding of, and belief in, the gospel. Paul is looking forward to a good report from the church, whether he can be there in person or not.

### **C. Expect but don’t fear opposition (vv. 28–30)**

**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. For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.**

The third thing that characterizes a worthy walk is living with an expectation of opposition but not being troubled or worried by it. Paul says in verse 29 that suffering goes hand in hand with belief and can be a positive thing when endured for Christ’s sake. Remaining unified in the face of suffering provides two important reminders. First, it reminds us of the destruction of the opposition. Paul says in Galatians 1 that anyone opposed to the true gospel is accursed. Opposition should remind us that God is the final judge who will set all things right. Second, it reminds us of our own salvation. Paul told Timothy that all who desire to live godly lives will be persecuted (2 Timothy 3:12). Opposition to united believers is a sign that we are walking in the true gospel.

Paul concludes this section with a reminder that he has faced and is facing opposition. Yet his eyes have been firmly fixed on God throughout his letter. Paul now transitions to pointing the Philippians to the Father, Son, and Spirit to encourage them to persevere in unity.

## **II. RESPOND RIGHTLY TO GOD (2:1–4)**

### **A. Rest in God’s encouragement (v. 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,**

While most translations use “if” in the four statements of verse 1, Paul believes these are already true for the Philippians. Christ *has* encouraged them. God’s love *does* console. The source and empowerment of their fellowship and unity *is* the Spirit. There *is* a great deal of affection and compassion among them. These things are a given for the Philippians, and they are true for us as well.

First, Paul knows we have received encouragement from being in Christ. From forgiveness of sins to the promise of resurrection, being in Christ brings numerous benefits that stand against any opposition we might encounter.

Paul’s deep relationship with Christ was summed up a few verses earlier: Paul depends so much upon his relationship with Christ that he says, “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21). Do you spend time thinking about what being in Christ means? I would encourage you to spend time reading or even memorizing passages like Ephesians 1:5–12 or Romans 8:31–39 or Colossians 1:13–23. It is essential that we set our minds on Christ and what He has done for us to be encouraged in our lives.

Next, God’s love comforts us and takes away our fears and doubts. God’s presence in our lives reminds us that the things of this world are temporary, but His love and faithfulness have no end. All Scripture points us to a faithful God who guides His people through the difficulties of life.

After that, the Spirit enables our fellowship, making it possible by unifying us all together in God’s family. We are all called children of God. The Spirit also sustains our fellowship by empowering each of us to love our neighbor as ourself. The Spirit continually transforms us into the image of the Son so that we might bring glory to the Father.

Finally, Paul notes that the Philippians experience affection and compassion. While the passage does not specify who they are receiving these from, it’s a summary of what the Philippians are receiving either from God or from one another. We certainly receive affection and compassion from God, and, when the church functions as it should, we receive these things from one another as well.

Are you taking the love of God and the encouragement of being united in Christ and the work of the Spirit in your life and turning these outward toward others? That’s what Paul wants from us in verse 2. We shouldn’t ask, “Have I experienced affection and compassion?” Instead ask, “How am I showing affection and compassion to others?”

## **B. Strive for unity (v. 2)**

**make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.**

If these godly encouragements in verse 1 are true—and Paul knows they are—then it would bring him great joy if these attributes would compel the church to strive for unity. Paul uses four phrases that communicate similar ideas. First, he wants them to be of the same mind. This is not just having the same ideas or thinking the same thoughts. It is a unified attitude toward life that he is after.

Second, they are to maintain the same love they have received from the Father and display it toward one another. While Paul specifically calls husbands to love wives as Christ does the church in Ephesians 5, he just as easily could call each of us to love our brothers and sisters in Christ as God loves us.

Third, Paul desires that they be united in spirit. He wants them acting together, moving in the same direction as a unified body, not as separate individuals. This can be hard for us in a preference-driven culture. For me, giving up my ways of doing things for someone who probably won’t appreciate my sacrifice is a

hard thing to do. We're conditioned to look out for ourselves. It's the other person who needs to change his stride if he wants to walk in step with me. Paul wants to turn that thinking upside down.

He finishes by repeating the verb he began with (the phrase "intent on one purpose" uses the same verb as "being of the same mind"). If it hasn't been clear up to this point, this long list of phrases reveals how important unity is to him and how necessary unity is to the Philippians. It is a safeguard against opposition.

But what exactly does Biblical unity look like? In verses 3 and 4, Paul gives some details about what this God-encouraged unity looks like. In short, it looks like placing others first.

### **C. Put others first (vv. 3–4)**

**Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.**

To put others first, we have to correctly evaluate ourselves. So Paul begins by reminding us how we are to view ourselves.

None of our actions should be done with the goal of promoting ourselves. We must not pursue glory for ourselves at the expense of someone else. Our goal is to make God look good, not ourselves. So we must put pride to death. We must give up wanting to be someone special and be content being Christ's children.

After we humbly place ourselves in the proper position, we elevate others. We are to regard everyone as more important than us. We need to see others as image bearers of God, Christ's children, those for whom He died. In the ancient world, humility was not a virtue. In the church, it is indispensable. No Christian unity exists without it.

Finally in verse 4, Paul reminds us that others' interests are our interests. The concerns of others should be our concerns. The struggles of others should compel us to action. This requires that we spend time with one another, learning one another's joys and hopes and fears and doubts and strengths and weaknesses, so that we can know how to place their interests above our own.

Unity doesn't exist in superficial relationships because we won't know each other well enough to truly serve each other well. And serving others well is a difficult task, especially because—and let's be honest—some people are hard to serve and hard to love. But what makes it most difficult is not others; it's ourselves. We like ourselves too much. We *love* ourselves too much. We are devoted to making ourselves happy and comfortable.

It would be helpful if we had a model, someone who had humbly put others first. Someone who had considered the interests of others as a higher priority than his own wants and desires. Thankfully, we do have someone like that, and Paul encourages the Philippians to look to the example of Christ.

## **III. LOOK LONGINGLY AT THE SAVIOR (2:5–11)**

### **A. Model Christ's humility (vv. 5–7)**

**Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.**

Paul begins by telling them that their attitude should be the same as Jesus' attitude. He's not telling them to die for humanity's sins. But the attitude that Jesus took to the cross is to be ours as well. Paul describes this attitude in verses 6–8.

First, we need to model Christ's humility. He is, as Paul would tell the Colossians, the one by whom "all things were created.... He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:16–17). Christ is fully God.

Yet Jesus did not demand His exalted position. He did not claim His rightful power and authority. He did not grasp at the greatness He eternally possessed. Jesus was not like the Roman gods worshiped in Philippi, who made decisions based on what advantage they could gain. No, He humbly emptied Himself. Note that there is no mention here of what He emptied Himself of. The idea is that He poured Himself out for us. So in humility He took the form of a bond servant. Deity became man. The Lord of all became the servant of all. Glory became humility.

And what about us? Compared to Christ, we have nothing half so worthy to boast about, but our attitude should be that of one willing to give up whatever advantages, rights, privileges, or powers we have for the sake of others. So, don't seek to hold on to any perceived greatness you might have. To model Christ's humility means we must be willing to set aside whatever gives us any sense of earthly importance.

### **B. Model Christ's obedience (v. 8)**

**Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**

Also, we need to model Christ's obedience. It's one thing not to grasp at greatness; it's quite another to follow orders that could bring physical pain and suffering. Yet that is precisely what Christ did. He obeyed the Father all the way to the cross. He poured Himself out physically for the sake of others, being willing to die so that you and I might gain eternal life.

Christ did not take advantage of His deity to avoid suffering, and we should never take advantage of a position of power we have to avoid suffering for the sake of someone else. We might not have to do a task because of a title or authority we have, but are we willing to? Would we be willing, as a boss, to take a pay cut to save someone else's job? Would we be willing as a manager to take a holiday shift for an employee?

Is our attitude the same as Jesus' attitude? When God calls us to love a brother or sister in Christ who is difficult to love, will we obey? When God calls us to forgive one of His children for the sake of unity when we've been hurt, will we obey? Will we be obedient in giving up our preferences for someone else in the church?

### **C. Worship Christ's majesty (vv. 9–11)**

**For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in Heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Paul makes one final point. He reminds them of the end result of Christ's actions: all creation will worship Him. He doesn't argue that we'll be worshipped if we adopt Christ's attitude of humility and obedience. Paul tells what is to come so that we will worship Christ now. Paul knows that our worship continues to

turn our gaze from ourselves to our Savior.

The Father placed Jesus in this high position because Jesus' humble obedience displayed the character of the one true God. True humility and obedience are characteristics of God, not of fallen humanity. We will worship the crucified Christ for eternity. Three times in the book of Revelation, John refers to Jesus as the lamb that was slain (Revelation 5:6, 12; 13:8).

The name that is given to Jesus in verse 9 likely refers to "Lord" in verse 11. The quote from Isaiah 45 confirms this. The one the people bow to and confess about in Isaiah 45 is none other than Yahweh, the covenant name God provided to Moses in Exodus 3. And Paul is applying this name to Jesus. This confirmation of the lordship of Christ is a final confirmation to stand united in the face of opposition, for Jesus is greater than any foe we face. All our foes will one day proclaim Jesus as Lord. Every head will bow; every knee will bend.

In the meantime, it is the believers' task to be a preview of the kingdom of God, characterized by the gospel, by chasing after the example of Christ alone. It is our calling to humbly and thankfully put others above ourselves, building unity among believers as we do this. This brings true glory to our Savior.

## **CONCLUSION**

Because our lives are lived in front of others, we need a perfect role model to follow. Jesus is the one true role model we have to help us navigate life. Our gaze should constantly remain on His sacrificial, humble death and glorious resurrection as the blueprint for how to live our lives. Next, we need to constantly remind ourselves, and one another, of the great blessings we have received from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God's love, the Son's example, and the Spirit's empowerment can join us in Christian unity like nothing else.

Despite God's working in our lives to maintain unity, we must also strive toward unity. Life will pose many challenges, selfishness from within and opposition from without. We all must determine that we will stand firm with our brothers and sisters in Christ against any opposition. We must also determine to humbly put others before ourselves. We must put to death the world's encouragement to chase our own glory. Finally, despite the opposition we face, we must believe that God will one day set everything right. Christ will reign! All our enemies will be defeated. He will receive all the glory so we will no longer chase it ourselves.

## **Prayer**

Lord, unite us by Your love. Open our eyes to see Your greatness and glory as it was revealed by the humility of Christ. Convict us when we seek to glorify ourselves at the expense of another brother or sister in Christ. And in that conviction, show us the gospel so that we might know our forgiveness in Christ and that we might see how we are to respond to one another. Unify Your church for Your glory, so that those who oppose us will see a glimpse of You in us. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

## SERMON EXAMPLES

Begg, Alistair. “An Attitude Like Christ (Philippians 2:1–11).” *Truth for Life*. [www.truthforlife.org](http://www.truthforlife.org).

What kind of attitude fosters unity? This experienced Scottish pastor shows it’s an attitude that looks at Jesus. Only by being united in Christ and seeking to model His example is relational harmony found.

Carson, D. A. “Adopt Jesus’ Death as the Test of Your Outlook (Philippians 1:27–2:18).” *The Gospel Coalition*. [www.thegospelcoalition.com](http://www.thegospelcoalition.com).

This well-respected scholar centers his message on the nature of the cross. He begins his message by showing the meaning of the cross from the New Testament as a whole. Then after a thorough examination and explanation of the text from Philippians, Carson points to the cross as the standard of Christian behavior.

Keller, Timothy J. “Imitating the Incarnation (Philippians 2:3–11).” *Gospel in Life*. [www.gospelinlife.com](http://www.gospelinlife.com).

The founding pastor of Redeemer Church in New York City describes our age of talk shows and tabloids as one that is fascinated with “inward thoughts” and demonstrates that Paul intended to show believers the attitude of Jesus so that they might model Him. Keller identifies three truths about what Jesus did and how He thought about them: He was God, He became human, and, being human, He humbled Himself and became a servant even to the death on the cross—and all this that we might live in a manner that is pleasing to God.

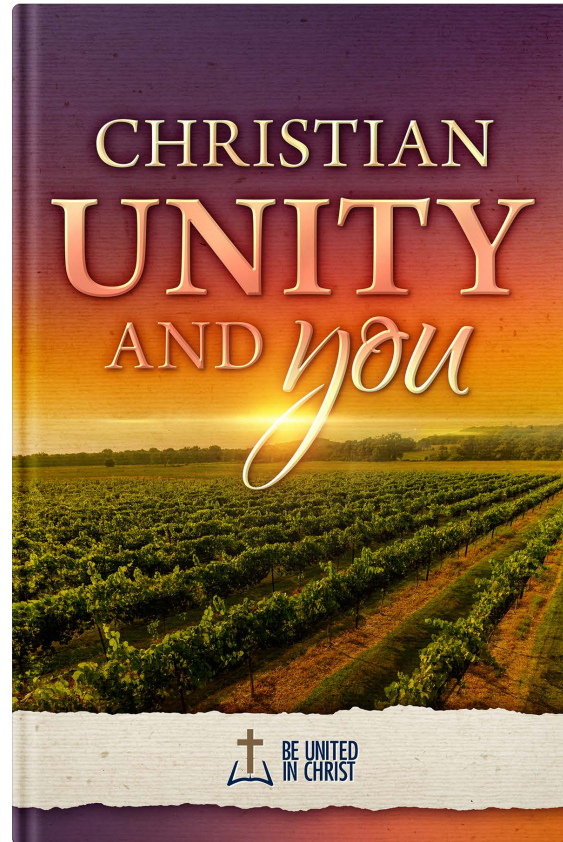
Murray, John. “Let this Mind Be in You (Philippians 2).” *The Gospel Coalition*. [www.thegospelcoalition.org](http://www.thegospelcoalition.org).

Murray, a founding faculty member of Westminster Theological Seminary, focuses on Philippians 2:5–9 in his message. From this text he highlights the dignity of Christ, the humbling of Christ, and the exaltation of Christ. Although Murray preached this message decades ago, the truths of his sermon ring true today.

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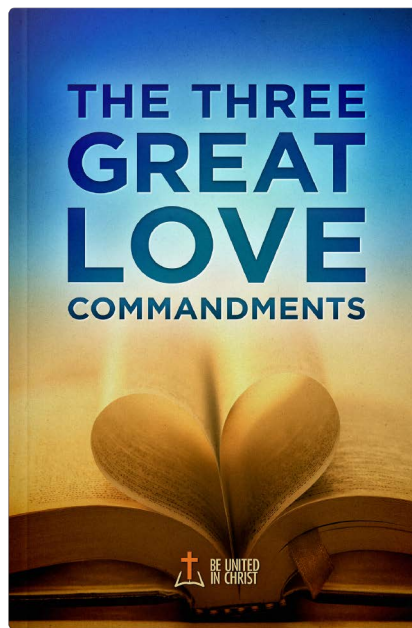
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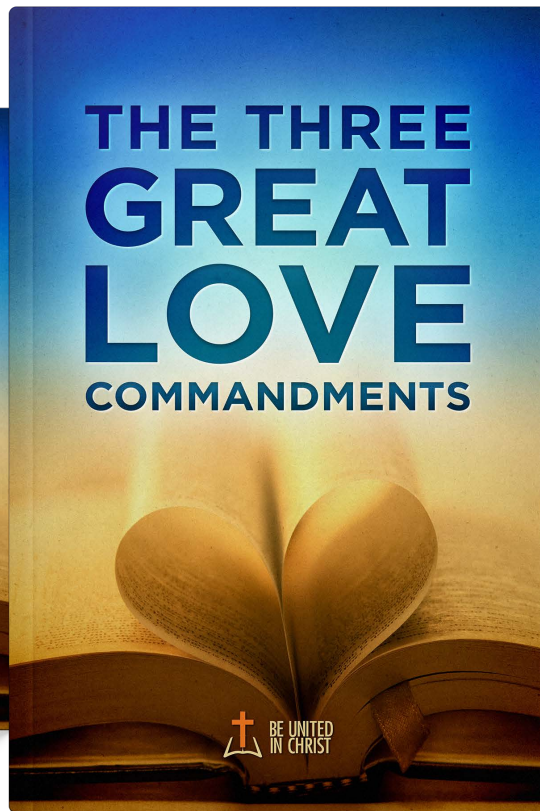
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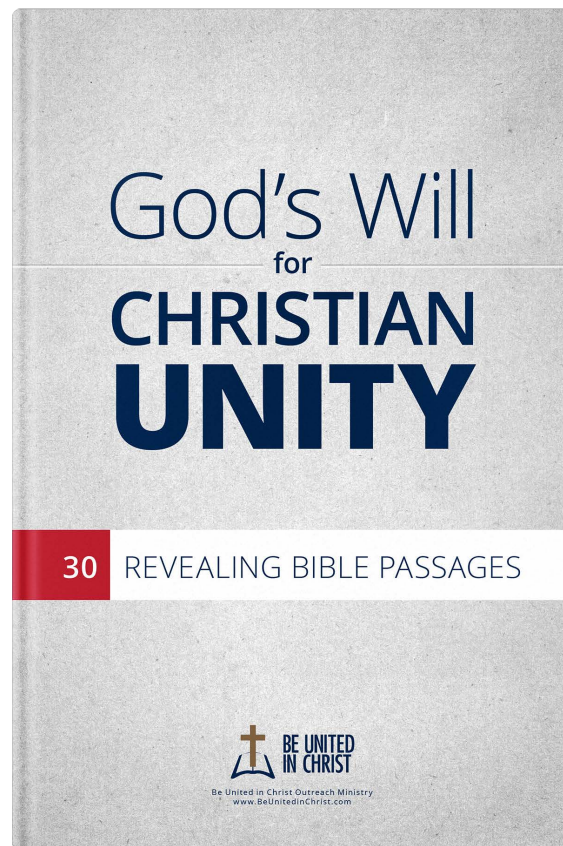
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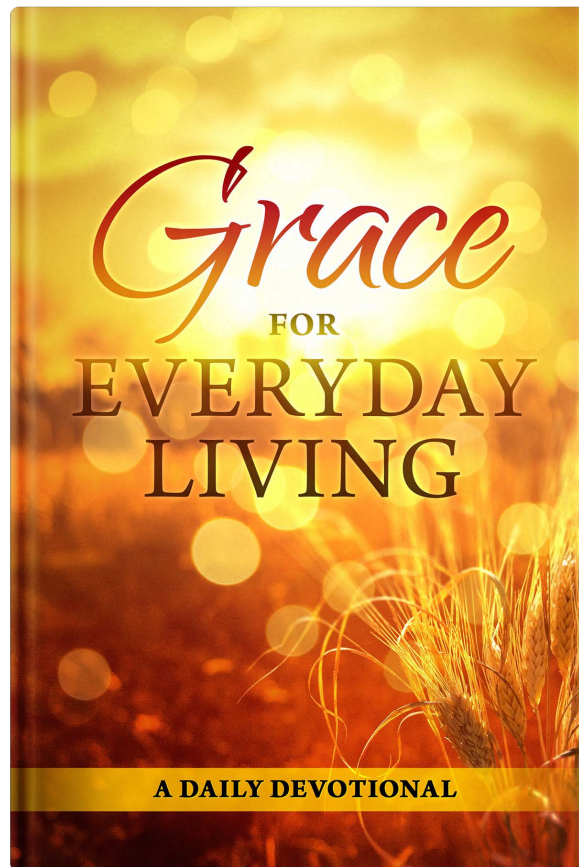
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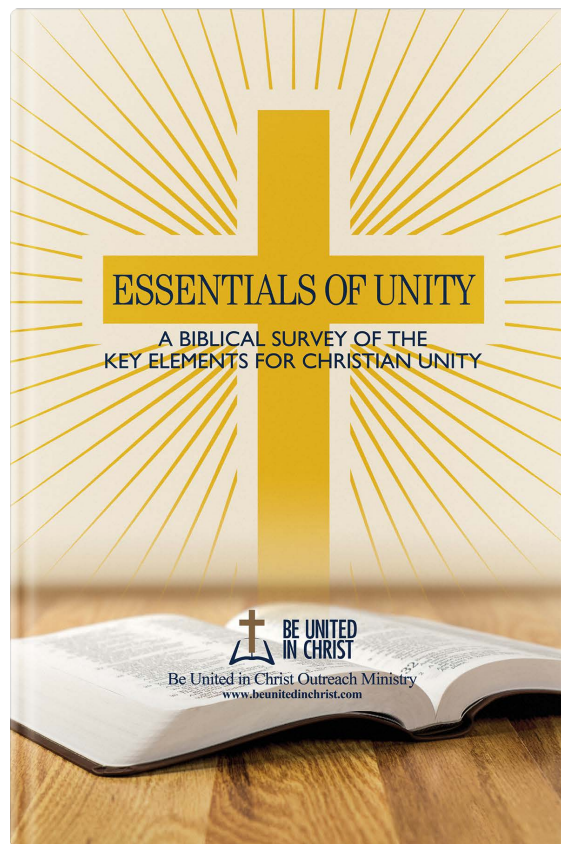
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# UNITY IS ESSENTIAL FOR GOD'S PEOPLE.

The Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry has written *Essentials of Unity* from a great sense of conviction ... to better understand God's will for the unity of His people, how He achieves it, and what He asks of each of us in preserving it. *Essentials of Unity* explains significant Biblical themes for understanding Christian unity and how these Biblical themes connect to one another in the storyline of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation.

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# FEEL THE PASSION OF CHRIST FOR UNITY.

In John 17:20–23, Jesus prayed for His disciples to be one ... united with Him and each other. In His prayer, we hear the passion of Jesus Christ for the union of His people to God and to one another. *One: The Passion and Prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ* was written to help God's people understand the nature of this unity as well as how it is to be accomplished in the body of Christ.

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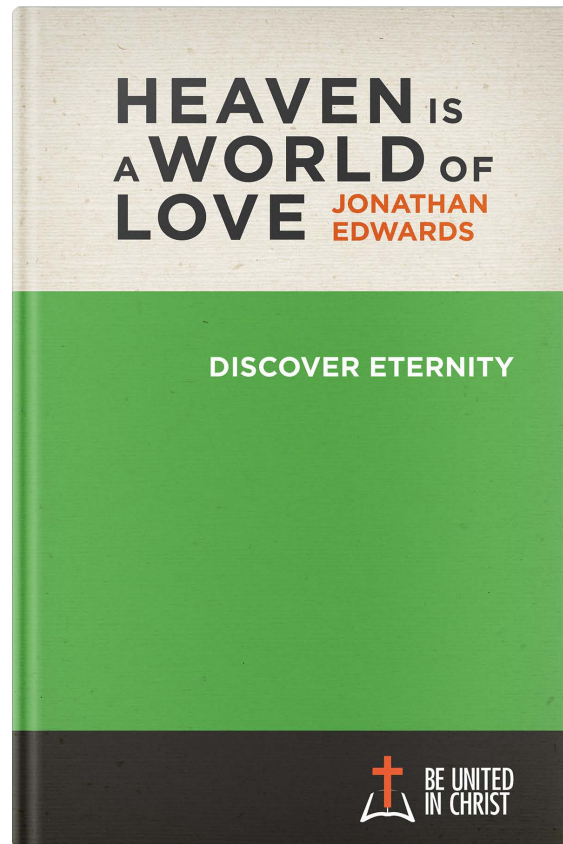


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# HOW WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY?

In the history of Christianity, no one has written as vividly on the subjects of Heaven and Hell as Jonathan Edwards. *Heaven Is a World of Love* combines Edwards' most powerful sermons and presents them in modern-day language. Be encouraged with the hope of Heaven, sobered by the horrors of Hell, and assured that you can spend eternity enjoying God's love.

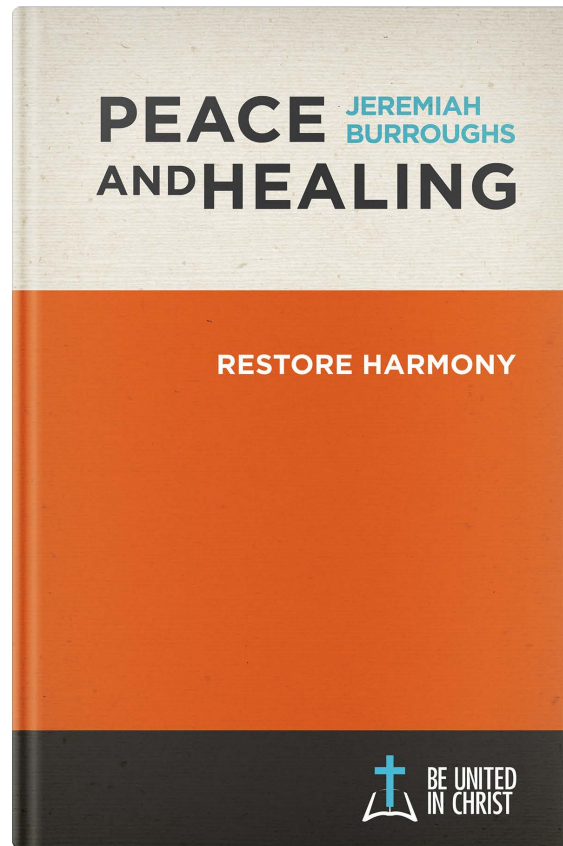
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# BRING HARMONY TO YOUR CHRISTIAN FAMILY.

What if your church could be conflict-free? Drawn from the wisdom of respected Puritan preacher Jeremiah Burroughs, *Peace and Healing* reveals the sources and dangers of conflict within God's family and recommends God's solutions. Get to the root of disunity and bring love and harmony to the most important relationships in your life.

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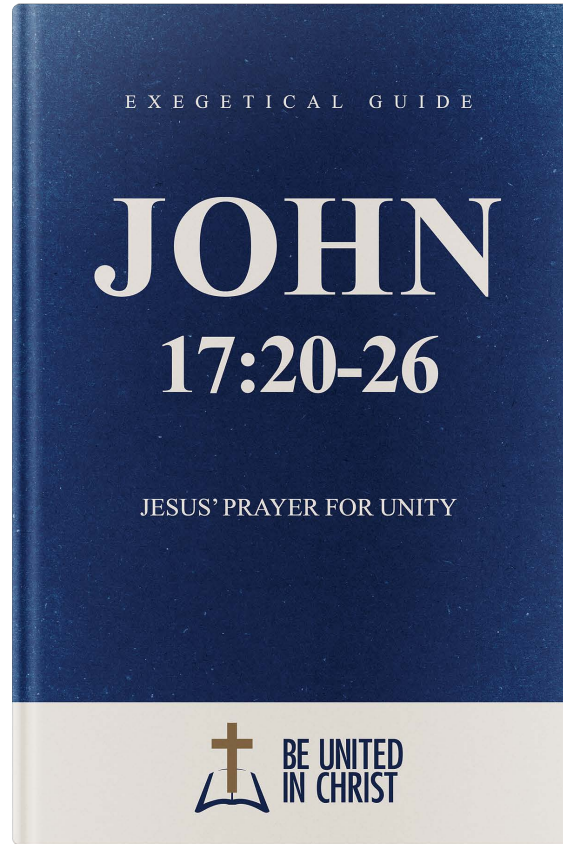


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# LEARN WHAT JESUS PRAYED FOR YOU.

In the hours just before He was crucified, Jesus prayed for you. But what did He pray? And why does it matter? With the *John 17:20–26* Exegetical Guide, you will see through Jesus' eyes and be moved by what He prayed for you at this critical time. You will find where you belong. And your desire to draw closer to God and to other believers will grow as you read this inspiring guide.

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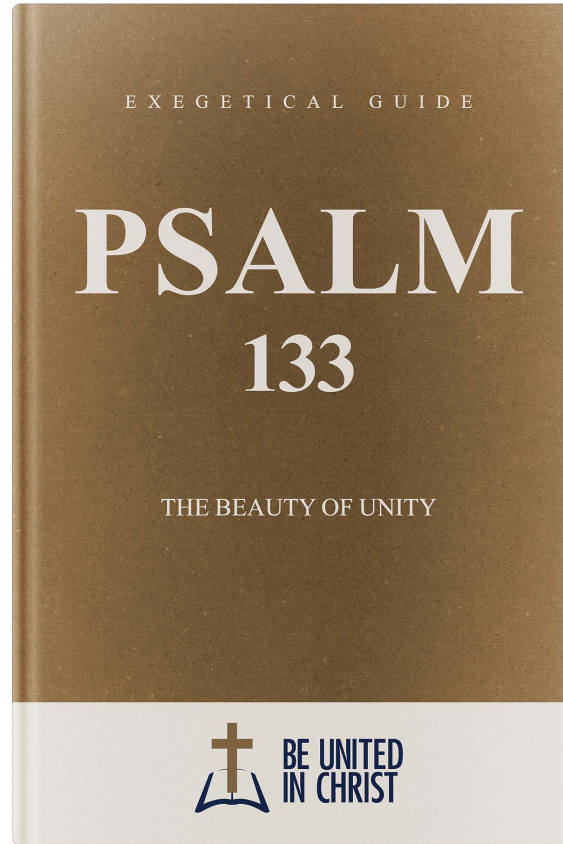




# DEVELOP A RICH CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

Blessing. Peace. Eternal life. How can you experience them for yourself? Explore *Psalm 133* and learn King David's song of the goodness and pleasantness of God's children living in harmony. You will discover that unity is not only God's desire but also His design to lead you into the satisfying life He desires for you to experience.

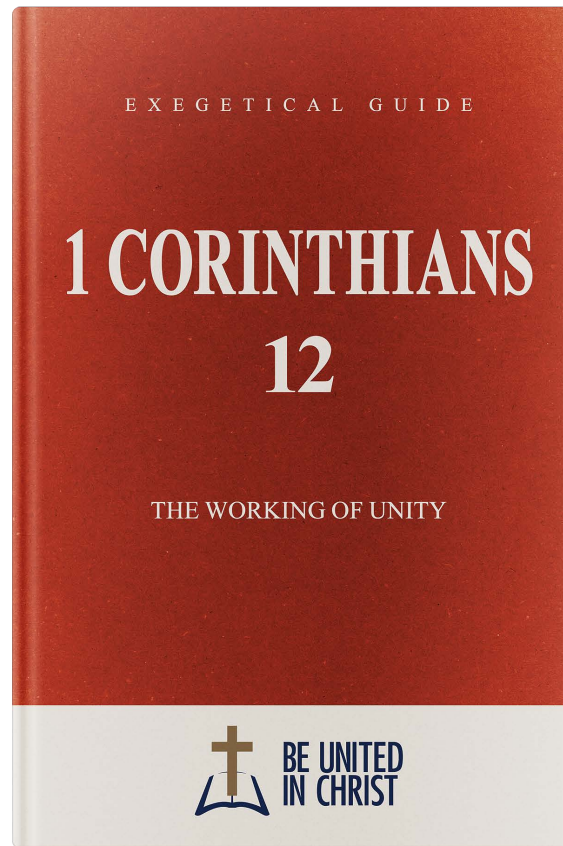
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# UNCOVER YOUR PURPOSE IN GOD'S PLAN.

All of us want to belong, to feel connected, to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. For the Christian, these desires find their fulfillment in Christ and in the life He has designed for His church. The *1 Corinthians 12* Exegetical Guide will show you how God intends to fulfill your deep need to belong. You have a reserved position in His plan. You have a unique place, and you have a vital role.

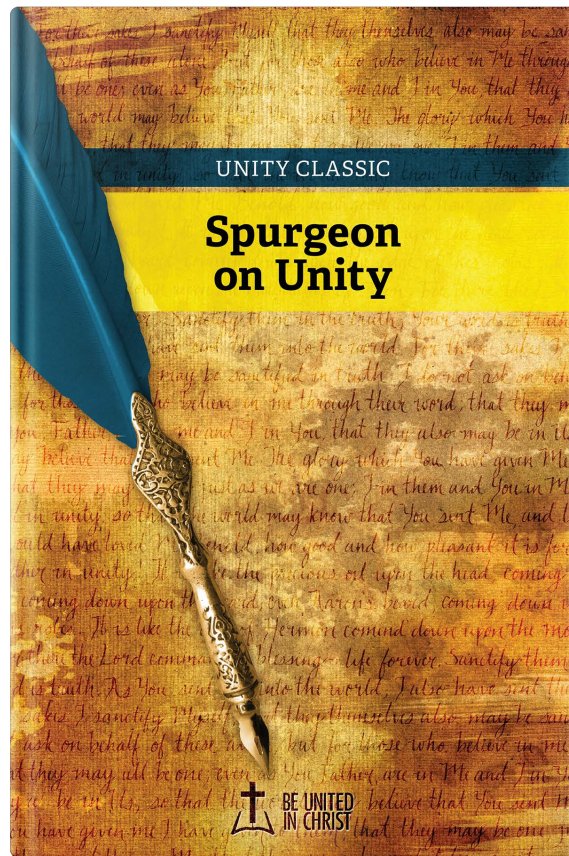
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# ENJOY THE LIFE CHRIST INTENDS FOR YOU.

The most prominent preacher of the 19th century, Charles Spurgeon pastored the world's largest mega-church and spoke to millions. Considered one of the greatest preachers in church history, his messages are as inspiring today as when they were first preached. *Spurgeon On Unity* lets you slip into the pew of this "Prince of Preachers" as he applies God's Word to one of your greatest needs.

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The desire of the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry is to glorify our Lord by helping our brothers and sisters in Christ to have a better understanding of our Lord's passion and prayer for His people to "Be United in Christ."

Please join us in the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry as we await the glorious return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



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