

Intro: No team wins championships if they aren't focused upon the same goal. No military wins wars if they aren't united in purpose and mission. When athletes follow their own goals and soldiers define their own missions, failure will find both. It is the same for the Church. Now, the "success" of the body of Christ is not about "winning" games or taking physical ground, but it is a perseverant and soul-bloodied battle toward the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. It is about pouring out every effort, every talent, every word for the sake of the gospel of Christ. And nobody knew this better than the apostle Paul. He was ready, he told the Philippians, to be poured out as a drink offering upon the altar of their faith. He was giving his all. And as he waited for the Rome's decision over his life, he admonished the Philippians to keep their eyes upon the goal together. He calls them, as those blessed by God through the gospel of Jesus Christ, to be united in their purpose and their intent, to remember their mission and strive together side by side for the faith of the gospel, to fix their feet securely and defend the ground of faith in Jesus. However, he also knew that if the mission to which we are called is to succeed in the field, then it must also be united with the humble and helpful love of one another on the home front. If the chemistry of the team is off, the game is lost. If the brotherhood of the soldier is forfeit, the battle is over. So it is with us. If the mission is set but the Church is not humbly working together with the camaraderie of love, then the gospel suffers. Unity for the sake of unity is not the goal. Unity in the gospel, for the sake of Christ is the goal, and the means to this unity is found in the power of the Spirit through humility and helpfulness so that all might hoist the trophy and raise the flag of Christ's triumph and renown in the world. This was what filled up Paul's joy bucket: God's people working together in humble service to see Christ exalted in all the earth.

1. Has the Gospel Had Any Effect in You?

- a. Therefore - indicates previous context predicates following imperative
 - i. Keep this description of unity within its context
 - ii. Living for Christ, Dying for Christ, Suffering for Christ, ALL for Jesus
 1. He is worthy and He is the goal
 2. Christ is glorified and we are to live worthy of the gospel of the Christ
 - iii. Military analogy of standing firm in defense of the gospel, striving side by side in united effort for the sake of the gospel and the glory of Christ
- b. encouragement - *παρακλήσις*
 - i. from the verb "to call alongside"
 1. used of the Holy Spirit in John 14-16
 2. basic meaning - to help, encourage, strengthen, exhort
 - a. indicative in this encouragement is exhortation
 - b. Exhortation is speaking words of truth that confront and heal, challenge and comfort, focus and strengthen, motivate to continue
 - c. This is particularly necessary amidst persecution and fiery ordeals
 - ii. in Christ
 1. The source and the sphere of this encouragement is in Christ
 2. The content of this encouragement is in Christ
 3. Christ is the center and the periphery of all exhortation that encourages, consoles, and comforts
- c. comfort - *παραμυθιον*
 - i. from the verb "to convince alongside"
 1. idea of persuasion that consoles or brings comfort
 - a. more than merely "being there" (although that is important)
 - b. telling words of comfort while alongside

- i. note that it is “alongside”
 - ii. one cannot comfort from before or behind
 - iii. to help carry the load, one must come alongside and place your shoulder under the burden of your brother and walk in step
 - ii. of love
 - 1. love of Christ for you all
 - 2. love then poured out into the lives of fellow soldiers for Christ
 - 3. love – that selfless and active desire for the well-being and beneficence of another
- d. fellowship - *κοινωνία*
 - i. sharing or participation together in something
 - 1. saw it earlier in the "the gospel"
 - 2. participation into something together
 - ii. the Spirit (2 Cor 13:14)
 - 1. mutual dependence and inclusion in the Spirit of God
 - 2. sharing in His power and His work and His presence
 - 3. The Holy Spirit is the general who unites our ragtag group of gospel warriors
 - a. United in the Spirit, participating together in His leadership toward Jesus
 - b. Revealing the reconnaissance of Truth according to the plan and stature of the Christ
- e. affection - *σπλαγχνία*
 - i. compassion, deep rooted feelings for something else
 - ii. also translated mercy, heart, love
- f. compassion - *οικτιρμοί*
 - i. synonym for *σπλαγχνία*
 - ii. deep rooted source of benevolent feelings
 - 1. LXX translates "the womb", compassion, with this word
 - 2. loving, merciful compassion of a mother for child

2. Then Fill Up Your Leaders’ Joy Buckets By Being United in Purpose

- a. COMMAND: complete my joy
 - i. Fill up what is left over for joy
 - ii. This is, in a sense, the last drop to fill what had already caused the apostle to rejoice from 1:4,18 so that his joy is completely full to the brim
- b. The fullness of the apostles joy is to see Christ’s people in unity of purpose toward the mission of glorifying Christ
 - i. the same mind
 - 1. concerns and thoughts toward something
 - 2. this is still in the context of military strategic language, minds together bent on one mission: the glory of Christ whether by life or by death
 - a. in the battle, the unit must keep focused upon the goal
 - b. not lockstep all doing the same things, but all focused upon the same goal
 - i. diversity of gifts but one purpose
 - ii. EXAMPLE: raising children to love and honor the Lord
 - 1. Public school
 - 2. Private school
 - 3. Home school

3. "worthy of the gospel of Christ"
 - a. This is the goal for which we strive: the GOSPEL
 - b. There must be unity on this!!
- ii. having the same love
 1. desiring the glory of God and the wellness of each other
 2. love for Christ first and foremost
 3. love for each other in all things
 - a. this flows naturally into the following verses pertaining to humility
 - b. considering others as "outranking" you
- iii. deeply harmonious
 1. "souls together"
 2. unity at the deepest level of your beings
- iv. one purpose
 1. "having one intent"

3. Unity Comes Through Humility and Helpfulness

a. Humility

i. NOTHING of rivalry or conceit:

1. Rivalry:

- a. Factions that elevate the honor and purpose of man rather than Christ
- b. The preachers in Rome set forth in chapter one were "rivalrous" setting up their own glory

2. Conceit:

- a. The word means "empty-glory"
- b. It is that inner glory-suck that desperately tries to honor itself and boast in itself in a clamorous effort to prove that he/she is something (to glorify oneself)

i. More will be said next week on this glory vacuum, but know that it expresses itself in two major ways:

1. Self-boasting – tearing others down and building up my own reputation and honor
2. Self-pity – wanting to be glorious but wallowing in my failure to be so

ii. Both are rooted in a desire to be glorified

1. John Wooden: "Be more concerned with your character than your reputation because you're character is who you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are."

ii. Oneness of mind and purpose set upon Christ's glory and His renown cannot be achieved without humility

1. How can we achieve oneness for God's glory when we are concerned about our own?
2. How can we be united when we are constantly scrambling to honor ourselves?
 - a. What, then, does suffering become but self-centered misery and completely useless?
 - b. What, then, does the threat of death become but desperation and joylessness?

b. Helpfulness

- i. Look out for the interest of others
- ii. True unity that is centered around Christ's glory is always steering each other back to the gospel, to repentance and dependence upon Jesus Christ for His glory
 1. This is what it means to love one another
 2. It may include more than this, but it is NEVER less than this
- iii. What does your brother/sister need?
 1. Are we asking this question?
 2. Are we bold enough, filled up with the Spirit of Christ, to sacrifice our lives upon the altar of love?
- iv. To be Christian is to not claim your honor, but to empty yourself of it so that Christ is seen as Lord and the Father is glorified in all things (v11)

Conclusion:

Jesus is worthy of everything that we have to give. It is He who has sacrificed His own honor to redeem us, for though is God He emptied Himself of His rights and became a servant who died on a cross to atone for our sins. He did not claim His glory through boasting in His greatness, but in dying like a sinner. He is the goal and the glory of His church. He is the unity and the purpose of this congregation. He is the head and the master of His body, and in order to truly glorify Him as He is worthy of, we are to fix our eyes upon the goal, be united together at the deepest levels of our being for His glory and renown, and exalt Him as the head and master of our lives both individually and corporately. Christ is the King who died to make His enemies His friends and brothers, so let us humble ourselves and serve each other with joyful determination to see Him glorified in each life, in every moment, with all power which comes from the Holy Spirit, until we all, together, fill up His joy bucket through our united praise.