

At Odds

Philippians 2:1-8

Pierre Cannings

I. Same Difference vs. 1-2

a. That Different?

- i. IF?- They should be translated “assuming ... then make my joy complete.” All four statements introduce the command of 2:2, and they identify Paul’s avenue of approaching the church. Paul gently reminded the believers of what he and they had in common.
 1. The best understanding of the word seems to be “encouragement” that comes from Christian commitment
- ii. Fellowship with Spirit- The meaning is ‘fellowship with the Holy Spirit Hence Paul means if you are partakers of the Holy Spirit and his gifts and influences.
- iii. Affection - as often in the ancient world, inner body parts served as referents for psychological aspects *affection and sympathy*
- iv. Compassion
 1. Again these terms refer to the mercies shown to them by the Lord. These statements make a strong emotional appeal. The church had a common experience of grace, and Paul built upon that in his exhortation. Since the other three of these qualities seem to be spiritual in nature, it is best to take this as a fellowship the Holy Spirit provides.

b. Same Mind

- i. uniform direction, a common mind, and unity of thought and will.
- ii. seek the same goal with a like mind,
 1. establishing the given unity and maintaining a Christian disposition in all things,
 2. The content of his exhortation is that they be “like-minded.” The verb used here occurs ten times in Philippians (of twenty-three times in the Pauline corpus). It speaks to the intellect (i.e., a way of thinking), but it goes beyond that. It incorporates the will and emotions into a comprehensive outlook which affects the attitude. With this word and the contexts in which it occurs, Paul spoke of the values and ambitions which surface through the mind. This is unity. It is not found in an identical life-style or personality. It occurs when Christian people have the same values and loves. Paul sought that in this church. Together these speak to the unity found among those who are going

the same direction. There is nothing superficial about it. This unity comes from the core of one's being.

3. Paul is not seeking for uniformity of opinion here. He does not ask that the Philippians all think uniformly. Rather, he asks that they strive for an inner sentiment for one another that is full of love as well as reflecting God's love

- c. Same Love
 - i. the quality of warm regard for and interest in another
- d. United in Spirit
 - i. Harmonious
 - ii. But unity is impossible if Christians are out for themselves, promoting their own cause, and seeking their own advantage
- e. One Purpose
 - i. Desiring to do the purpose of Christ

II. High Low vs. 3-4, 6-8

- a. Not About You v.3
 - i. **Nothing from selfishness v.3**
 1. **"despicable nature" of those who do not obey the truth but seek immediate gain**
 - ii. **or Empty conceit v.3**
 1. **The idea is "base self-seeking**
 2. **exaggerated self-evaluation; pride without proper basis**
 3. **vainglory is opposition to God's glory**
 - a. A seeking of glory which is, in reality, empty because it focuses on the individual rather than on the Lord.
 - b. It implies a contrast with the state of mind which seeks the true glory of God, as ch. 1:26. Its object is vain and fleshly—something which imparts only a superficial glitter in the eyes of the worldly-minded. In Gal. 5:26, κενόδοξοι is further defined by ἀλλήλους προκαλούμενοι, ἀλλήλοις φθονοῦντες. The temptation to this fault would arise, on the Jewish side, from the conceit of an exclusive divine call, privilege, and prerogative, and an exaggerated estimate of circumcision and the law (Rom. 3:1, 9:4). Against these the Philippians are warned in ch. 3. On the Gentile side the temptation would lie in the conceit of a profound

gnosis, and in their self-esteem growing out of their call and the rejection of the Jews.

iii. **but Humility of mind v.3**

1. **Place yourself low with modesty**
2. **Putting someone higher than yourself**
3. **You place yourself there (your choice) against nature**
 - a. lowness of rank; abjectness. At best the classical conception is only modesty, absence of assumption, an element of worldly wisdom, and in no sense opposed to self-righteousness. The virtue itself is founded in a correct estimate of actual littleness conjoined with a sense of sinfulness. It regards man not only with reference to God, but also with reference to his fellowmen, as here
 - b. Christ's humility is the standard for evaluating the worth of others and actions toward them. This does not mean that personal concerns should be overlooked. Elsewhere Paul clearly stated that Christians must take care of their own affairs as an act of love for the congregation (1 Thess 4:9–12).

iv. **Looking out for the interest of other before yourself v.4**

1. looking.' For this use of the participle instead of the imperative, comp. Rom. 12:9; Heb. 13:5. It forms an expansion of the previous words. ΣΚΟΠΕῖν is 'to look attentively'; to fix the attention upon a thing with an interest in it. (See Rom. 16:17; 2 Cor. 4:18; Gal. 6:1; Phil. 3:17.)

III. **Like v. 6**

- a. He is God but... v. 6
 - i. He was in the splendor and glory of being
 - ii. Did not claim or assert His title as a prize to be held
 1. He had the same position and claim equal
 2. Had all the rights of deity
- b. He emptied Himself v.7 2 Cor 8:9
 - i. Releasing of position or prestige: of Christ,
 - ii. Who gave up the appearance of his divinity
 - iii. He existed as God but the purpose changed
 - iv. Undoubtedly Christ gave up his environment of glory
 1. He negated himself, deprived himself of his worth, denied himself

2. He denied his heavenly Glory and Splendor
 - v. He took upon himself limitations of place (space) and of knowledge and of power,
- c. He self-willed not to use His deity or advantages
- d. Took the form of a Bond Servant v.7
 - i. This contrasted His heavenly existence in glory to slave
 - ii. Did not come as a king but to serve Matthew 20:28
 - iii. Extreme deprivation of one's rights
 - iv. In the Likeness of man
 1. He was fully God and fully man
- e. He Humbly Obeyed v.8 Is 53
 - i. Voluntary removed His heavenly prestige
 - ii. Voluntary was subjected himself to the likeness of man and a servant
 1. Yet still sinless Heb 4:15
 2. To the point of death Galatians 4:4
 - a. This is the most humiliating death for criminals and slaves