



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians

Chapter 2

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Introduction

- Knowing that there is a conflict between two women in the church of Philippi (Phil 4:2), St Paul in chapter two emphasized the importance of preserving the unity
- Conflict happens mainly because of ego, so we have to be humble if we want to have the same mind
- The Lord Jesus Christ is the perfect example in humility



Introduction

- Obedience is the fruit of humbleness
- When we are one, our light will be shining before others
- When the shepherd sees his children walking in unity, this will prove to him that his labor was not in vain and his heart becomes joyful
- At the end of this chapter, St. Paul explained his plans regarding Timothy and Epaphroditus



Preserving The Unity (2:1-11)

- “Therefore” implies that he is here expanding on (Phil 1:27), “in one Spirit, with one mind.”
- He urges four motives to be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind (Phil 2:2)
 - ❖ Consolation in Christ
 - ❖ Comfort flowing from love
 - ❖ Fellowship flowing from the Spirit
 - ❖ Affection and mercy



Preserving The Unity (2:1-11)

- The unity fulfills the joy of the shepherd
- It is unity in mind (goal), accord (harmony), and love (energy).
- We need to avoid:
 - ❖ Party spirit (instead of having the same goal)
 - ❖ Striving for human praise
 - ❖ Looking only for our own interests



Preserving The Unity (2:1-11)

- We need to adopt:
 - ❖ Lowliness of mind
 - ❖ Esteem others better than us
 - ❖ Looking for others interests
- We need to acquire the mind of Christ
 - ❖ He is God
 - ❖ This was not an act of robbery (as when we esteem ourselves better than others)



Preserving The Unity (2:1-11)

- ❖ He made Himself of no reputation (emptied Himself)
 - ❑ Taking the form of a bondservant (giving up His will)
 - ❑ Coming in the likeness of men
 - He humbled Himself
 - Obedience unto death
 - Even the cruel death of the cross



Preserving The Unity (2:1-11)

- Humbleness is the road to exaltation
- Therefore: The just consequence of His self-humiliation and obedience
- Highly exalted Him: gave all power into His hands
- The name of Jesus (savior) is above every name
- All the creation bow to Him in love (Angles, humans) or fear (devils)
- Every tongues confesses His divinity and thus glorifying His Father



Strive For Obedience (2:12-18)

- Therefore: because of the Lord's sacrifice
- We need to work out our own salvation:
 - ❖ Sincere obedience
 - ❖ With fear and trembling which befits bondservants, with the utmost care, diligence and trembling anxiety not to fall short of the goal



Strive For Obedience (2:12-18)

- The will, and the power to work, being installments of His grace, encourage us to work out our own salvation
- Our will does nothing without grace; but grace is inactive without our will
- For His good pleasure: in order to carry out His sovereign gracious purpose towards us, which is our salvation



Strive For Obedience (2:12-18)

- When we learn to be humble and obedient, we will not complain or dispute
- Complaining and disputing are the fruit of wanting to carry one's will and glorifying one's ego
- Complaining and disputing are destructive to the unity and oneness in Christ



Strive For Obedience (2:12-18)

- When we stop complaining and disputing we will become:
 - ❖ Blameless (before God)
 - ❖ Harmless (toward others)
 - ❖ Children of God (peacemakers)
 - ❖ Without fault (before others)
 - ❖ Shining as light in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation that wants to glorify itself



Strive For Obedience (2:12-18)

- In order to acquire the mind of Christ and live in unity and humbleness we need to hold fast the word of life (obey God's commandments)
- This will make St. Paul (the shepherd) rejoice in the last day that he did not labor in vain
- His labor and sacrifice is like a drink offering but the main offering is their sacrifice and service of faith (humbleness and unity) (see his humbleness)
- The mutual joy in the middle of suffering

Apostolic Support For Philippi (2:19-30)



- St. Paul is planning by the Holy Spirit to send Timothy as soon as he knows how things go with him, to be encouraged when he knows their state
- He trust that he himself may be able to visit them too
- Timothy has the same mind of his teacher
- He sincerely cares for them
- Not like other, he does not seek his own interest but Christ's
- His character was proven during the time of hardship
- He served as obedient son with his father

Apostolic Support For Philippi (2:19-30)



- Also St. Paul is planning to send Epaphroditus too
- He described him as his brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, their messenger (because through him they sent their offering to St. Paul), and one who ministered to his needs
- St. Paul considered that God's healing to him was an act of mercy toward St. Paul himself

Apostolic Support For Philippi (2:19-30)



- The reason behind sending Epaphroditus are:
 - ❖ Epaphroditus was long to them
 - ❖ He was distressed when they hear that he was sick unto death.
 - ❖ That they rejoice
 - ❖ St. Paul becomes less sorrowful
- They should receive him in the Lord with gladness

Apostolic Support For Philippi (2:19-30)



- He came close to death:
 - ❖ For the work of Christ
 - ❖ Not regarding his own life
 - ❖ To supply what was lacking in their service toward St. Paul
- They should hold Timothy, Epaphroditus, and other servants as in esteem



Conclusion

- How do we attain the unity of hearts and spirits?
- What do we learn from the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ?
- What is the exalted name of Christ?
- Why we need to work out our own salvation, if the Lord had finished it on the cross?
- Why we should stop complaining and disputing?
- How did St. Paul perceive his martyrdom?
- What are the characteristics of Timothy and Epaphroditus?