

Scripture: Deuteronomy 5:1-21 & Philippians 1:1-18
Singing: 259:1, 2, 4 – 384:5 – 203:1-5 – 29:1-3 – 354:1-4

Let's Study Philippians (6)

SEEKING UNITY WHILE FACING DIVISION

I. The reality of division among God's saints

II. The recipe for unity among God's saints

I. THE REALITY OF DIVISION AMONG GOD'S SAINTS

A. Church Rome experienced 'under the surface' division (vs. 15-16)

1. From outside it appeared as a 'well-functioning' group but not all rosy

2. From outside their preachers also appeared to function well (Phil. 1:15-16)

a. these preachers are among the 'many of the brethren' of vs. 14

b. they preached the *right matter* but not all with *right motive*

3. First group: *preached Christ from very wrong motives* (vs. 15a, 16)

a. envy:

b. strife:

c. not sincere:

4. Second group: *preached same Christ with right motives* (vs. 15b, 17)

a. good-will & love

B. This 'reality' is Rome is reality still: we always will face *threat of division*

1. because Satan's strategy remains *divide and conquer*

2. because even best saints are only *beginners in sanctification*

a. even Paul had his defects (Phil. 3:12-14, 20-21)

II. The recipe for unity among God's saints

A. Paul's response to this disunity is our direction: vs. 18

1. What was absent in Paul's writing?

2. What was present is astonishing: *I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice*

B. What is then the recipe for unity among God's saints?

1. Not that we all think alike – make same conclusions – hold same conviction

2. But when we all are passionate about preaching of Christ's Gospel

a. Christ's Gospel is *not an opinion or views on things not specified*

b. Christ's Gospel is story of God's amazing and powerful love

c. What we need more and most in our culture is *more of Christ!*

Living the truth ...

A. Pray more and talk less

B. Pray more and witness more

Fellowship Hour Discussion Starters

General Discussion Questions

1. What struck you most in this passage from Paul's letter?
2. If you were in the church of Rome, how would you deal with the rot of envy?
3. Paul saw himself as a defender of the Gospel. What would such a person do?
4. Despite the wrong motives, what can we learn from the brethren in Rome?

Question for our Youth (15up) & Adults

1. Every church has strengths and weaknesses. What are ours?
2. What do you suggest could we do together about weaknesses?
3. How can we better use our strengths?

Question for our Children

1. Many Christians are in prison like Paul. Not all of them are adults. Many are children your age. What are 5 things we can pray for when we think of them?