

***SHEDDING LIGHT ON
LIVING ABOVE YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES, #4***
(COVID LOCK-DOWN STUDIES)

How to Make Your Enemies Love You

Philippians 2: 1-11

Introduction

What is the key to harmony in relationships & greatness in God's eyes??

In a word: *humility*. Instead of using other people, start serving other people. It will be amazing how your attitude toward them changes... and their attitude toward you will be transformed.

I. Paul's Exhortation (Phil. 2:1-2)

A. The Problems at Philippi

The Church at Philippi was a strong Church, an evangelistic Church & a missions-oriented Church. But as someone observed, the "domestic affairs" of the Church were not as ideal as the "foreign affairs". Fractures were appearing within the fellowship.

i. Doctrinal Problems (Phil. 3:1-3).

False teachers were infiltrating the Church & that seemed to be causing difficulties. The job of a Pastor is to protect the Church from false teachers & false systems of belief. Paul did that with the Churches he had pastored.

ii. Relational Problems (Phil. 4:2)

For every one Church that splits over doctrinal problems, there are probably one hundred that split over personality clashes or power plays. Two women in the Church were having a bitter dispute... apparently people in the Church were taking sides & it was causing real problems.

B. The Solution: UNITY (2:1-2)

(i) Unity is not:

- (a) **Unanimity**... A Church can be unified without being unanimous. Not every believer is spiritually mature & that means not every decision is always going to be unanimous.

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(b) **Uniformity**... Nowhere does God require that all Christians look alike, act alike, or think exactly alike.

(ii) Unity is:

- (a) Same mind. The idea here is doctrine & belief. That doesn't mean we have to believe the same about everything, but we must have the same mind about the basics.
- (b) Same love... A love for Christ & for one another.
- (c) Same purpose... glorifying God!

II. Paul's Explanation (Phil. 2:3-4)

Paul says that the key to harmony in relationships is humility. That means viewing both ourselves & others from God's perspective.

III. Paul's Illustration (Phil. 2:5-11)

A. Humility means surrendering our rights for another's needs (2:5-7a).

Jesus was equal to God & yet He did not regard His equality with God something to cling to... but instead He gave up His rights & privileges as God to meet our needs.

B. Humility means submitting our will to God (2:7b-8a)

Although Jesus was equal to God, He voluntarily submitted Himself to God's Will. When we give up our rights for the good of another we are ultimately serving God.

C. Humility means sacrificing temporal pleasure for eternal gain (2:8b-11)

Whenever you choose to place others' interests above your own, your choice does not go unnoticed by God. There is an eternal reward coming for those who willingly submit their will to God's Will.

Conclusion...

Humility is the willingness to give up your rights to meet the genuine needs of others.

Our genuine need is forgiveness, so God sent a Saviour Who gave up His rights in order to meet that need.

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