



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Harmony and Joy in the Lord

JUNE 27, 2012

Tom McCullough / PO Box 503, Granville, OH. 43023/ tom.mccullough@capitolcom.org / www.capitolcom.org.

The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians (60-62 A.D.), Paul is imprisoned (one of four Prison Letters, the others being Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon) in Rome addressing the established Christian (mostly Gentile) church in Philippi, the first founded by Paul in Europe. In this letter, Paul, having a fondness for the people of the church of Philippi, because of their faithfulness and generous nature, wanted to thank them for their gifts, letting them know why he was returning Epaphroditus to them, sharing his situation in prison, urging unity in church, and warning them against false teachers. While false doctrine had started to plague many of the churches, he wanted to provide encouragement for practical living and support for sound doctrine. While much of the letter deals with spiritual growth, the tone throughout is that there is joy in Christ and Paul rejoices in Christ being proclaimed regardless of his circumstance and that they also must conduct their lives, suffer, press on and live in harmony in and for Christ. (Php 4:1-5 NASB)

“Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.” (4:1)

Equals in Christ. Paul addresses the believers in the Philippian church in several ways; as beloved, those that he loved; brethren, as family and equal in Christ; long to see, extended wanting to see them; my joy, his fellow believers in Philippi brought joy to his heart; and his crown, their growth and service in and for Christ made him proud. Understanding that they will have conflict, Paul urges the Philippian church to stand firm in the Lord, similar to the urging that he made to the Ephesian church (Eph 6:11-14). What specifically did Paul urge two helpful believing women to do that were in conflict?

“I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.” (4:2-3)

Harmony in the Lord. Paul urges Euodia and Syntyche, “to live in harmony in the Lord.” Paul is not talking about harmony in disagreement over doctrinal issues, since he warns the people against false teachers earlier in his letter. However, he urges harmony in non-doctrinal issues since these are sisters in Christ who are fellow workers that shared in his struggle for the gospel and whose names are in the book of life. Paul calls the rest of the church to help or assist these sisters in the resolution toward harmony in the church. As in music, this harmony is one that brings the actions into agreement to produce a pleasing effect. So the resolution, as in music may not be a single note, but rather one that both sides resolve and bring into agreement actions that are in harmony with the Lord. Paul is single focused in his joy in the Lord and urges the believers to be the same.

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.”(4:4-5)

Joy in the Lord. Paul continues with his consistent message in this letter that regardless of the circumstance, good or bad, believers are to find joy in the Lord. That message is so important that Paul says it twice, rejoice in the Lord! Additionally, Paul shares that the believer should be known to others by their gentle spirit. That gentle (Gk *epieikes*, meaning yielding, gentle or kind) spirit is results in actions toward others that are yielding, kind and serving. Paul declares that, “the Lord is near”, is active and living inside us.

For your Consideration:

- Do you fellowship with believers that you love, want to be with and consider family?
- Are you in harmony with all believers in your fellowship or local church?
- Do you find joy in the Lord and rejoice, always? Would others say that you have a kind, yielding and or gentle spirit?

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: SESSION OR HEARING WEDNESDAYS AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE RM. 44

STAFF, LOBBYISTS AND CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY: WEDNESDAYS AT NOON, STATEHOUSE RM.44