

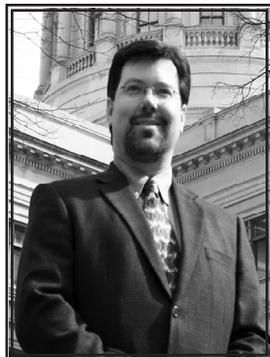
CHURCH NEWS

AN INSPIRING MOMENT WITH

Dr. Ron Bigalke

LIVING IN UNITY AND HUMILITY

Philippians 2 begins with an exhortation to live in unity based upon four aspects, which are visualized in the following table. As a consequence of these four aspects (2:1), the believer is to be "of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in Spirit, intent on one purpose" (2:2). Christian unity should be an evident characteristic of all true believers because Jesus taught it and prayed for it (cf. John 13:35; 17:21). The spiritual unity that all believers possess should be visible.



Unity among believers is a mental attitude. The humiliation of Christ Jesus is the first and most important illustration of this attitude. Jesus humbled himself and surrendered the use of his personal attributes and power. He "existed in the form of God" (2:6). The Greek word, huparchon, translated "existed" is a present tense participle, which indicates that existence "in the form of God" is a prior form of being; in other words, the Lord Jesus exists eternally, and this form was prior to Him "taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men" (2:7). Jesus humbled and denied himself for the sake of others. God, therefore, has "highly exalted Him" (2:9-11; cf. Matt 23:12). Certainly, it is not natural to live in humility, and to give of oneself in the manner exemplified by Jesus. Pride is the easier choice, but it will always be harmful to self and others. How does one not think solely of self? The first step demands much because it is the recognition that everyone struggles with pride; we all nourish and cherish ourselves (Eph 5:29). If one thinks they are not conceited, then it means one is quite proud indeed. The good news is that living in

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unity and humility is possible through the sovereign work of God (cf. 2:12-13). One must be humble "under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time" (1 Pet 5:6). The believer may then experience the truth of Philippians 4:13 which states, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." Living in such a manner is not only possible, but also an act of obedience, which pleases the Lord God.

Any encouragement in Christ?	Be of the same mind!	UNITY	DISUNITY
Any consolation of love?	Be maintaining the same love!	"of the same mind" "intent on one purpose"	"selfishness" "empty conceit" "personal interests"
Any fellowship of the Spirit?	Be united in Spirit!	REMEDY: but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for ... others	
Any affection and compassion?	Be intent upon one purpose!		

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ESQUIRE FASHION SCRIPTURE OF THE WEEK

Wise choices will watch over you. Understanding will keep you safe.

Proverbs 2:11