



SERIES: LOOKING BACK – MOVING FORWARD

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Scripture: Philippians 2:3-4

TITLE: The Secret to Unity

I was an only child. So, being selfish was possible, but a tad bit harder, when you don't have to share. So when I see my kids argue and fight over their things, I just don't get it. They seem to want what the other one has, even if they have something equivalent in their own hands. It makes no sense. But then I think about money and how tight-fisted I can be. I realize I'm no different than my kids. It's just what I'm selfish with and who I'm doing it to.

Paul has some very practical advice for us today, as we aim to live as citizens of Heaven:

“Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.” (Phil 2:3-4, NLT)

In the previous few verses, Paul has been pushing the need for unity. We are called to have one mind and one purpose as the people of God. Well, in verses 3-4, Paul tells us how. He says if you want to break unity, then be selfish. Why do marriages fall apart? The simple answer is selfishness. Why do friendships fall apart? Selfishness. Why do many churches dissolve? Many times it comes down to selfishness. Christ is the perfect example of selfless. He was *agape* love incarnate. He gave up Heaven to become sin for us. If you want unity, we must stop being selfish.

Then Paul says, “Don't try to impress others.” The King James Version calls this “vainglory.” It's empty conceit. It's the unhealthy pursuit of accolades and recognition. It's saying, “Look at what I've done. Look at what I have.” But friend, all the good you have in your life is by God's grace. It's a gift. Your spiritual status wasn't earned. It was a gift. It's not about you. It's all about Christ.

Paul says, “Be humble”. Humility isn't thinking of yourself as a loser, or less than you are. True humility is seeing yourself rightly. It's seeing yourself as God sees you - no more and no less. And this is true for how we view others. We see them as people made in the image of God. Skin color, haircut, clothes, bank accounts, home size, or job titles do not establish a person's value. Their value is always high, because they are God's image-bearers.

Then Paul says, “Don't be selfish in your endeavors, but think of others.” Be a teammate, not a one-man show.

Paul wants us to be united, so here's my challenge for you today: find one way to show someone their intrinsic value. How can you show them they matter to God? How can you be a teammate, or a helper, as they strive to pursue their interests – specifically in serving the Lord?

Share in the comments below what you intend to do. We want to encourage you and pray for you as you live out this call for unity.

A unified body is an example of God's grace and power. So now go win the day.