

## LESSON 6

Philippians 2:1-4



# United We Stand

## OPEN IT

1. When did you and a group of your friends have a hard time deciding what to do? How did you end up deciding?

## DAILY DEVOTIONS

Day 1

TODAY'S THEME: EXPLORE IT

Read Philippians 2:1-4

2. In what ways does Paul want the Philippian Christians to be unified?
3. What reasons does Paul give for why they should be unified?
4. How does Paul tell the Philippians they will be unified?

## Day 2

### TODAY'S THEME: WHEN YOU'RE HERE, YOU'RE FAMILY

Read Philippians 2:1-2

Have you had an argument with your siblings and your parents told you guys that you might as well learn to get along because you'll always be related? I understand the sentiment, but I also know that in those moments when I've been upset with my siblings, I had no desire to "get along" with them. It makes sense that we should try to get along and be unified as a family, but why would Paul want these people to be so unified?

The reason is that we have received so many blessings from God (encouragement in Christ, comfort from love, participation in the Spirit, affection and sympathy). Since God has blessed me with those things and He has blessed you with those things as well, God becomes a commonality in our lives, holding us together.

Now think about God for a minute: "God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God."<sup>1</sup> God has existed in all eternity as three distinct persons but in perfect unity. I admit, the Trinity is difficult, perhaps impossible, to understand fully, but the unity of the Trinity gives us a reason to strive for unity in our own relationships. Since God Himself is a God of unity, as His people we should also be people who strive for unity.

So what Paul is saying here essentially is that if we have experienced the blessings of being in a relationship with God, then we should live in unity as God lives in unity. In light of who God is and all He has done, let us stand together as Christians united by this great God we love.

5. What do you think it means to have encouragement in Christ?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What do you think it means to participate in the Spirit?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What things can prevent us from having "the same mind and same love" as other believers? What things can threaten this unity?

**PRAYER GUIDE** ➤ Here are some things you could pray for today:

Ask that God would bring even greater unity to our church. Pray for unity in your small group, in the student ministry, and in our church as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup> Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, Chapter 14, p. 226.

## Day 3

### TODAY'S THEME: HAVE IT YOUR WAY

Read Philippians 2:3-4

Unity can be a difficult thing to find in today's world. Even though we live in a culture that promotes tolerance to the degree that it does, we find ourselves in a time of great divisiveness. How are we supposed to find such a deep unity that Paul talks about here?

To find deep unity, we have to look to something greater than this world because the things that are part of this world are what continually divide us. Once we have recognized that our unity is rooted in God, we need to look at our own lives and make sure we are living in that unity! The greatest threat to our unity as believers is our own pride. This is why Paul tells us that we should do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit. We need to humble ourselves if we are going to be able to find unity with others. If you are just living for yourself, then there is no way you can serve others to the extent that God expects us to.

Humble yourself and consider other people as more important than yourself. Put their needs above your own needs. It's really quite simple, but very difficult to do. Imagine living in a world where everyone was putting the needs of others above their own. That sounds like a pretty solid place to live! As you put others' needs above your own, there will always be someone else to put your needs above theirs. In the end, we are all working together, unified and serving each other.

8. Give an example of how you can put someone else's needs above your own.

9. What does it mean to humble yourself?

**PRAYER GUIDE** ➤ Here are some things you could pray for today:

Pick a person you know and pray that God would bless him/her in great ways. Think of specific things that would be good for that person (not just things they want, but what would actually be good) and pray that God would work to that end.