



A Spiritual Encouragement Message May 13, 2020

Butting Heads

I was in the living room last night and I heard my two children begin to argue in the other room. I guess my son decided to put on some little glasses that belong to my daughters L.O.L. (toy) doll and that made her upset. As a result, she was hollering at him to "take them off" while he laughed and downplayed the severity of the situation. As they passed by me to go spend a moment in their rooms to consider their actions and reactions, I asked myself where they were learning this behavior. Surely it wasn't from my wife and I because we never butt heads or have conflict in our relationship, it's all warm and fuzzy between us.

I love Philippians. Out of all the books of the Bible Paul's letter to the church in Philippi is one of those unique and inspired writings that fills me up as I strive to live a faithful life in Christ. What makes the letter extra special is the reason of the writing, the instruction that Paul gives to help resolve the problem, and how these instructions can help us today through similar struggles. If you haven't spent time soaking up this letter please don't wait to dive into it, you are missing out.

There was a fight in the body! Two of the prominent Christians in Philippi just couldn't get along for some reason. These hard working and godly women, Euodia and Syntyche, seemed to be on different pages and at odds even though both of them were faithful servants of Christ (Philippians 3:2-3). As a result, Paul emphatically and strongly urged them to "live in harmony in Lord." In other words, be of the same mind, agree together, have the same views, and be harmonious (Philippians 2:2, 3:16).

Live in harmony! What we find in Paul's letter to Philippi is an beautifully woven letter packed full of sustenance that can equip the church and these two women to be harmonious in Christ. Like a thanksgiving table packed with an assortment of sides, desserts, and main

dishes, Philippians is a letter with an assortment of principles, examples, and doctrines that were meant to help the church, namely these two women, have unity in the Lord. God doesn't just command these two women to have a godly relationship, but He provides the instructions on how to do it in the Philippian letter.

Use this letter! What are we at, around 60 days? 60 days of spending more time with our spouses, kids, and/or those we have designated as our inner group during this unique time. I don't believe I am alone in saying that this major change in our schedule has provided us with more opportunities to have relational problems and conflict. What should we do when our households are not as harmonious as we would like them to be, as God would like them to be? What should we turn to when kids are fighting, parents are fighting with kids, or we are fighting with our spouses? Where should we go when we have relational conflicts that we are struggling to resolve? Go to the banquet table of Philippians and eat up! This inspired, beautiful, and unique letter can not only help you get your relationships through this crazy quarantine intact, but can help you strengthen them.

Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.

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.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:1-9)

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