

The Old Hickory

Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

841 Old Hickory Blvd.

Jackson, TN 38305

July 10, 2011

Volume 31, # 28

Come On Sisters, Get It Worked Out *Quickly!*

Phil. 4:2

“I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.” We don’t have any reason to believe that the church in Philippi was torn apart like Corinth, but here is a direct statement indicating two women were, in some way, at odds with each other.

It has been my observation, after many years in local churches, **I don’t care how big the church is, if two people are at odds, there is a good possibility it is disturbing more than just those two people.** Bitterness, coldness, anger and wrath are impossible to conceal. And when such things are displayed or detected, it is discouraging and can have nothing but a bad influence.

Now I want you to imagine, you are one of these two. And at an assembly of the church one of the elders makes it known – “Epaphroditus has returned. He is well now and he brings to us this letter from Paul. Listen to this letter from Paul.” The elder or Epaphroditus reads the letter aloud; **you are one of these two individuals and you hear this.** “I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.”

How would you feel? *I would feel – first, shame, then MOTIVATION to get with the other person, and resolve the matter righteously.* Now look back in your Bible at verse 2 in Philippians 4, and I want to ask this: **How many people are implored?** Two. Both of them are addressed. I don't know exactly what the issue was between them – but Paul assigned to both of them, the responsibility to resolve the conflict. Some things you can't just ignore. There needs to be some outside or third party help or admonition. Have you ever heard this little quote? “To dwell above with the saints we love, O that will be glory; But to dwell below with the saints we know, that's a different story!”

It is highly possible, sometime in your life, to some extent – there will be some sort of conflict. The test of character is – do we seek to resolve it, and how do we resolve it, and how quickly do we seek to resolve it. I've had people come to me on various occasions through the years and say something like – **I'm concerned that I have offended you, and I'm sorry.** And I have no idea what they are talking about. I wasn't offended. I may remember something that was said but I took no offense. But listen – the attitude of being worried about it, and wanting to resolve it, **is an attitude I honor; I really appreciate it.**

Do you recall what Jesus said about this? “Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny,” Matt. 5:23-26. If you think it may help you in your reading and study in the future, underline this word, “**Quickly.**” NIV: “Settle matters quickly with your adversary...”

Are you in one of these conflicts? Jesus says to you, “Quickly!” Get it settled.

- Warren E. Berkley

“Let There Be No Strife

When contention arose between the herdsmen of Lot and the herdsmen of Abram, “Abram said to Lot, ‘Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren’” (Genesis 13:8). God’s friend Abraham knew that brotherhood demands the cessation of strife. I fear that some brethren today believe that brotherhood demands incessant strife.

Some practical measures for keeping peace include the following:

1. DO NOT START A QUARREL!

Proverbs 17:14 says, “The beginning of strife is like releasing water; Therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts.” While it is true that there are principles of truth that must be defended, argued and contended for (Jude 3, Philippians 1:17), MANY quarrels among brethren are over things that have not even been revealed in Scripture. Others involve judging hearts and motives by appearance, instead of judging with righteous judgment (as Jesus instructed in John 7:24). This kind of strife should be nipped in the bud! We must simply “avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife” (2 Timothy 2:23).

2. DO NOT SPREAD TALES!

Nothing fans the flames of strife more effectively than gossip. Conversation that is seemingly well meant can provide fuel to a fire that would otherwise die out. When a brother begins a conversation (or e-mail message) by asking, “Do you know what brother so-and-

so said about you?” he may mean well, but what follows is usually combustible! “Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, strife ceases” (Proverbs 26:20).

3. LOVE YOUR BROTHER.

“Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins.” (Proverbs 10:12). It is amazing how easy it is for folks to tolerate the faults of their loved ones, family, longtime friends, etc., while at the same time refusing to tolerate similar or lesser faults in those outside their circle of friends. If we could learn to show love, without prejudice or partiality, we might find a lot less to pick at in others (cf. 1 Timothy 5:21).

4. FORBEAR.

The instructions given in Ephesians 4:1-3 for “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” include “forbearing one another in love” (KJV). According to Strong’s Dictionary “forbearing” means to “put up with, bear with, endure, suffer”. Some have the idea that they “don’t have to put up with” anything from a brother in Christ. Nothing could be further from the truth. Even if you are being unjustly mistreated, “putting up with it” and taking it patiently is one of the truest marks of a follower of Christ (cf. 1 Peter 2:20-21). Suffering real or imagined injustice from a brother is a sad excuse for causing strife. It’s an excuse Abram would not use, and neither should we. We might learn to be more forbearing if we would stop and realize how much we need others to “put up with” us! “Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them.” (Matthew 7:12).

- Steve Klein

To every man there openeth
A way, and ways, and a way.
And some men climb the high way,
And some men grope below,
And in between on the misty flats
The rest drift to and fro.
And to every man there openeth
A high way and a low;
And every man decideth
Which way his soul shall go.

- John Oxenham

SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"Requirements of Right Decisions!"*
(text: Joshua 24:14-24); Sunday evening: Jesus Christ: A Closer Look – *Doom
For Jerusalem!* (Mark 13:1-31).

SCHEDULE: Our Fall Gospel Meeting is scheduled for Sept. 18-23, with Eric Reynolds.