

# Unity in the Lord

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Please take your Bibles and let's turn in our precious word to Philippians chapter 3. Philippians chapter 3, I'll begin reading at verse 17.

Join with others in following my example, brothers. I'm at 3, chapter 3, verse 17. And take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.

For, as I have often told you before and now say again, even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Their destiny is destruction. Their God is their stomach and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.

But our citizenship is in heaven and we eagerly await a savior from there. The Lord Jesus Christ, who by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

[ 1 : 1 2 ] Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends.

I plead with Iodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, loyal yoke fellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again. Rejoice. Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. What a savior. We've come to the last chapter in this little letter to the Philippian church this morning.

I said last week that verse one really belongs on the end of chapter three. Because it starts, therefore, my brothers, in other words, in light of what I've just said, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends.

[ 2 : 3 4 ] So he's pointing back to what he said. That's how you're to stand firm in the Lord. Now, we're mistaken if we think that standing firm in the Lord is easy.

It's not like what you just did, standing there as you stood and sang. No one was trying to move you. You just stood there. It's more like sumo wrestling.

And the sumo wrestler standing in the center of the ring with his legs apart, standing firm. Because there's another sumo in the ring with him. And his whole object in being there is to move you out of the ring or put you down on the mat.

And sometimes he's pushing. And sometimes he's pulling. And sometimes he's lifting. And sometimes he's squishing. But you'll have all you can handle just to stand firm and not be moved, let alone try to move him out of the circle.

Well, there are forces in the world and in you, Christian, that are out to move you from Jesus Christ and the truth as it is in Jesus.

- [ 3 : 42 ] Several weeks ago, the June 5th issue of World Magazine carried an article on former evangelicals who have renounced Christianity. They're called ex-angelicals.
- Missionaries and pastor's kids. Former student of Moody Bible Institute. Former writer for Desiring God Ministries. Former ministers like Josh Harris who wrote, And he and they have now kissed Orthodox Christianity goodbye.
- And that article clearly demonstrates that not all who start out professing Christ, even in conservative evangelical circles, continue to stand firm in the Lord.
- According to Jesus, standing firm is no small thing for the Christian in this world. In Matthew 24, Jesus tells his disciples about the pressures that they will experience.
- Pressures to move them off their stand on Christ and his gospel. He said, You'll be persecuted and put to death and hated by all nations because of me.
- [ 4 : 52 ] Many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other. And many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.
- Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. But he who stands firm to the end shall be saved.
- Who will be saved, Jesus? Those who stand firm to the end will be saved. And that's the point Paul is hammering home here in verse 1.
- What I've written you in this letter is how you should stand firm in the Lord. Chapters 1 and 2, you talked about persecution from the world. And how not to be moved by it.
- Paul was going through the same persecution that now the Philippian church was going through. Chapter 3, he's told them not to be moved from the truth by the false prophets who have come within the church to deceive and lead many astray by their false doctrines.
- [ 6 : 02 ] So if you would stand firm, this is how you are to do it, he says. Don't have anything to do with preachers. Of legalism. Any Christ plus gospels.
- Of course, we have to have Jesus to be saved, but we also have to do these works in order to merit salvation. No, no, not at all. As if Christ is not done enough by his obedience and cross.
- And if you would stand firm, this is how. Avoid teachers like that. Avoid them like the plague. And avoid the ditch on the other side of the road. Not only those who say, well, we can be saved by keeping the law.
- But those who are anti-nomians, anti-law people. And therefore, live morally lax lives. And they reason this way.
- Since I'm saved by grace and not by law keeping. Well, then I don't need to repent of my sins. I don't need to obey God's commands because I'm not under the law. I'm under grace. And these false teachers in the church.
- [ 7 : 08 ] Are turning the grace of God into a license for sinning. And Paul says very plainly that though there are many of them. And though they preach Christ as if they were friends of Christ's cross.
- In reality, they're enemies of the cross of Christ. And though they claim to be Christians who are going to heaven at last. In fact, their destiny is destruction.
- Their God is their stomach. Their glory is in their shame. And their mind is on earthly things. Now that's the world we live in. All sorts of pressures.
- Pushing, pulling, trying to squeeze you. Into the world's mold. Rather than following Christ. Standing firm to the end.
- Where are you feeling the pressure to quit pursuing perfect likeness to Jesus? Where are you growing tired of forgetting what's behind you.

[ 8 : 06 ] And straining for what's coming. That prize of seeing Jesus and being made like him and living with him forever. What's causing you to slow down and slacken in your pursuit of holiness.

And not laying hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of you. To make you like himself. Well, that's where you need to fight. That's where you need to stand firm in the Lord.

You're in him. Like a branch is in the vine. Draw help from him. And all the pressure in the final analysis is to move you away from Christ.

Don't let those pressures move you from him. Rather, let those pressures push you closer to him. As you feel your weakness. You feel the pull of the world. You feel the weariness of keeping his commands.

And so you come and you say, Jesus, I'm empty. Come and fill me with your grace. Let it push you to him. That you might stand fast. Looking for that day when he will come to us.

[ 9 : 11 ] Or we will go to be with him. This is how you stand firm in the Lord, my friends. And so we were thrown into chapter four then.

And as we come into this last chapter, I can't help but see the same three major themes that we have seen Paul hammering home throughout the letter. We find unity and the concern for unity in verses two and three.

And he deals with a unity problem. He deals with joy in verses four to 13. Both telling us what feeds joy and what steals joy in our lives.

And then verses 14 to the end. He talks about the mission. The gospel mission. How this church had partnered with Paul in the gospel mission that he was doing.

So for today, let's hear God's word to us about unity in the Lord. Verses two to five. How important is unity in the local church?

[ 10 : 12 ] Well, how important is it in your home, father and mother? Well, it's no less important to Christ in his family. And this is reflected by the apostle Paul who invested his life, and we could say his blood, to plant these churches.

And now daily feels the burden and weight of caring for these churches. But even Paul's investment in these churches are nothing like the investment of the Lord Jesus.

From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride. With his own blood he bought her. And for her life he died. He's invested in this bride, the church.

Paul's invested in it. And so when Paul in prison hears about two female members of the church who are locked in a contentious and unresolved argument, the busy apostle with many churches to care for doesn't just say, oh, well, it's just two women.

I haven't got time for this. He doesn't overlook it as a little thing or write it off as mere personality difference. He doesn't say, oh, well, you know, no church is perfect.

[ 11 : 24 ] So, Philippi, I guess you're just like the rest of them. He's deeply disturbed by the problem. And he takes action to address it. Notice the four things that Paul does to restore unity between these two ladies.

Number one, he calls these sisters out by name in this letter that was read to the gathered church. Can you imagine that? So Paul's written the letter, sent it back with Epaphroditus.

He comes and he gathers the church and he reads the letter. And then he comes to chapter three and verse two and he calls out two women in the congregation by name.

He stops addressing the whole congregation and he personally and directly addresses them. Euodia and Syntyche.

Now, the problem must have been known to the whole church or I don't believe Paul would have done so. It must have been a threat to the church's overall unity. And so he calls them out by name, Euodia and Syntyche.

[ 12 : 29 ] Someone has suggested that one was odious and the other soon touchy. We don't know about that. In fact, we don't know anything about what the disagreement was about even.

Or who was in the right and who was in the wrong or were both. It is interesting that Paul exhorts both. Because when loving unity between two is broken, they each have a responsibility before God to make every effort to live at peace with one another.

So Paul considered the problem serious enough to interrupt his words to the whole church. And to publicly and directly address these two women by name. That's the first thing, but it's not all that he does.

Secondly, he then passionately pleads with them to bring their contention to an end. Notice verse 2. I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord.

To be of the same mind in the Lord. Twice he uses this word, plead. Have you done any pleading lately?

[ 13 : 42 ] Maybe your kids have. Pleading with you for something they want. It's not a word that is detached from emotion, is it?

It carries a lot of emotional freight, this word, plead. Not a calm take it or leave it appeal. No, it's I entreat you.

I urge you. I beseech you. I beg you. I pray you. I plead with you. Are some of the ways it's translated in our New Testament.

Like Paul says to the Galatians who were wondering from the gospel of Christ. I plead with you brothers. Become like me for I became like you. Second Corinthians 520.

We, we apostles, we preachers, we're therefore Christ's ambassadors as though God were pleading through us. We implore you.

[ 14 : 40 ] We beg you. We pray you on Christ's behalf. Be reconciled to God. Whether or not you are reconciled to God. Matters deeply.

And we plead with you. We beg you. To be reconciled to God. And so with these two ladies we find Paul is pleading.

That's the word he uses. Pleading with them on Christ's behalf. To be reconciled to each other. Most of you know Stuart Elliott. Semi-retired British minister.

Who's been a visitor and friend of Grace Fellowship for many years. Preached to us many times. As always to our edification. Lifting the Savior before us. His preaching is simple.

Plain. Direct. Well illustrated and applied. And he's had this burden to see more preaching in the churches that is patterned after the preaching of the Lord Jesus.

[ 15 : 40 ] And he just takes the Sermon on the Mount. He says notice how Jesus preaches. Biblical truths are simply stated. Illustrated.

And applied. That's the Lord's method. That's the Lord's method. And he's been burdened for more of that kind of preaching in the world. So for many years. He and Dahl labored in Lausanne, Switzerland.

And had this burden to see French speaking pastors there. Who would preach like Christ preached. And so he and missionary David Vaughn. I believe were the ones who were instrumental in starting a pastor's conference.

Of French speaking pastors there. In Europe. Mainly Switzerland and France. But Stuart was vexed. I don't think that's too strong of a word at all to use.

He was vexed with the preachers being turned out of the local seminary there. Sermons were more like dry research papers. Written for seminary professors. Than they were clear.

[ 16 : 42 ] Bible truths. Practically applied to ordinary people. In the real world. And so year by year at this conference. Stuart would go up to these professors. And he would say give us preachers.

Train preachers. Failing to see any significant change over the years. At last at one of these conferences.

And I have it from David Vaughn's. Testimony. That Stuart got down on his knees at the conference. And pleaded with these brothers.

To give us preachers. Now can you imagine the quintessential British Stuart Elliott. Down on his knees. Pleading.

We need preachers. Preachers. The word of God needs to be preached. As Jesus has preached it. Even so. The highly respected. The beloved apostle Paul.

[ 17 : 49 ] To whom this church owed their very existence. Under God. Is now begging. He's reduced to pleading. With these two ladies. To agree with each other in the Lord.

To come to mutual understanding. In the Lord. So that's the second thing. He calls them out by name. He passionately pleads with them. To be reconciled.

And thirdly. He openly then speaks of their great value. To him. It's really interesting. And important.

It starts back in verse one. You know. These two women are included in Paul's comments. There in verse one. To the whole church. They're. They're members. They're there too.

And these words in verse one. Are applying to them as well. Therefore my brothers. It's a plural. It's brethren. And it included the. The ladies as well as the men.

[ 18 : 45 ] He sees them as co-members. Of the family of God. You whom I love. And long for. I love you with the affection. Of Christ Jesus. And I long. To be with you.

My joy. And my crown. My reward. Before the Lord. To show that my labor. Has not been in vain. You're my. My crown. You're the thing. That rejoices me.

To see you. Standing firm in the Lord. My dear friends. So. So Paul's heaping up. These terms of endearment. And it's true.

He's speaking. Of. You audience. And Tiki. As well as everybody else there. But then in verse two. He pleads with these two ladies. To agree with each other. In.

The Lord. Interesting. Yodi is in the Lord. So. Tiki's in the Lord. The commentator. Robertson says. They are real Christians. In spite of their bickering.

[ 19 : 43 ] For they are both. In the Lord. And he goes on then. In verse three. To show that these were. Valuable. Co-workers. To Paul. They contributed much.

To the cause of the gospel. Of Christ. We don't know exactly. What that work looked like. But Paul praises them. Before the whole church. For their work. In verse three.

Paul describes them as. Women who have contended. At my side. In the cause of the gospel. Along with Clement. And the rest of my fellow workers. Whose names are in the book of life.

So these were active women. Strong women. Harmoniously laboring. Side by side. With the apostle Paul. And with each other. And with his companions.

In the work of the gospel. But then something went wrong. And instead of. Contending side by side. As we saw in Philippians 1.27.

[ 20 : 35 ] As the phalanx. Side by side. Moving against the enemy. They started contending. Against one another. And some agreement. That they let come between them.

Spoil the unity. That they once enjoyed. You know when we all stick. In isolation. From one another. And you go your way. And I go my way.

And I stay in my house. You stay in your house. And we rarely meet. We rarely talk. We rarely rub shoulders. We don't have a whole lot. Of interpersonal problems. But when we start to work together.

And we're side by side. In the work. Well. Maybe you don't agree. With the way that I. Think that the work. Ought to be done. And maybe I don't agree.

With you. With. With what the work. Ought to be. And. And all sorts of ways. That when we're shoulder. To shoulder. Working together. That disagreements.

[ 21 : 31 ] Can arise. And we splash. Our sins. On one another. We rub each other. The wrong way. And it does appear. That it. That this disagreement. Arose.

In the midst. Or at least. They had known. Sweet. Unity. Of working together. Positive. Benefit. To. The cause. Of Christ.

And how Satan. Loves to shut down. Such works. By getting us. To shoot our arrows. At each other. Rather than. The real enemy. Satan himself. Sowing his lies.

So. So Paul's in prison. And all he can do now. Is to write. And plead with them. To work it out. And he calls on them. To agree. In. The Lord. And I believe.

That's the key. To their restoration. It's the Lord. He's the key. If you. Odie is in the Lord. And some tickies. In the Lord.

[ 22 : 27 ] Well then. They should be able. To agree. With one another. In the Lord. In the Lord. The things. Uniting them. Are far greater. Than the things. Dividing them. They have the same father.

The same savior. The same spirit. Indwelling them. The same Bible. The same mission. The same. Inheritance. And destiny. How small.

Our differences. Appear. When we see. What we have in common. In the Lord. And that's how. He urges them. To be reconciled. In.

The Lord. Be of the same mind. In. The Lord. Surely that means. That each of them. Are to have.

The mind of Christ. That's what Paul said. Back in chapter 2. In verse 5. To the whole congregation. If they're to. To have the same mind.

[ 23 : 24 ] In the Lord. Then. Then let the mind. Of Christ. Be in you. And have the same. Humble attitude. Of self-sacrificing. Love. Self-sacrificing. Love. Seen in Christ.

In his incarnation. And. His death. On the cross. And so. As Christ. And in the Lord. Just like him. Have nothing to do. With selfish ambition.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition. Or proud conceit. But in humility. Consider each other. Better than yourselves. Not selfishly. Looking out. For your own interests. But having a genuine concern.

In the interest. Of the other. That was the mind. Of Christ. That brought him. Out of heaven. That took him. To the cross. For us. Now. Have that mind.

In you. Be united. In. The Lord. And where that attitude. Predominates. In our hearts. Our differences. Will not be allowed. To ripen.

[ 24 : 18 ] Into broken relationships. Even when certain. Differences remain. For we are one. In. The Lord. Well. That's the third thing. He does. He.

He. Is. Speaking of their great. Value. To him. Valuable.

Sisters. In the Lord. And then. Lastly. He. He also. Asks. Someone. In the church. To help them. Resolve. Their differences. You know. Sometimes. Christians. Need.

A mediator. To come. Alongside. A third party. To look. With a more. Objective. Look. And to. Help them. Be reconciled. But Paul's in prison.

He can't come. So what does he do? Well. He. He calls on someone. In the congregation. There. Verse three. Yes. And. And I ask you. True yoke fellow. Help these women.

[ 25 : 15 ] Now. Just to this. True yoke fellow. Was. We don't know. But the church did. Paul wouldn't write a letter. And. Call on one of the helpers. To help these ladies. If nobody knew who it was.

So. So the church knew. Who this. True help. Yoke. Fellow. Was. In Greek. What it says is. I ask you. True. Syzygus. Help these women.

Well. The word. Syzygus. Means. Yoke fellow. In Greek. And it could have been a name. So. So what he could be saying. Is that.

Brother there. In the church at Philippi. Named. Syzygus. Whose name means. Yoke fellow. Yoke fellow. Someone that. Is in the yoke. Pulling. With another.

And Paul's saying. Syzygus. True to your name. I'm asking you. To get in the yoke. And put your shoulder. To this difficult. But important work. Of helping this. These women. To be restored. To each other.

[ 26 : 15 ] So unity. Is of critical importance. To the family of God. Paul could have commanded them. To get along. But instead.

He lovingly. Pleads. With these ladies. Begging them. To resolve. Their disagreements. And to love one another. In. The Lord. Lord. And it's implied.

That they also need. To receive the help. Of the faithful man. In the congregation. Whom he's charging. To help them reconcile. And all. Ultimately.

For the Lord's sake. The Lord's sake. Because the unity. Of the church. The unity of. Christ's church. Is being disturbed. The work of.

Christ's mission. Is being interrupted. And the honor. Of his name. Is being tarnished. So may the Lord. Continue to help us here. At grace.

[ 27 : 11 ] Fellowship. Church. To be a church. Where we. Graciously. Fellowship. With each other. Around our gracious. Savior.

Now I'm going to skip over. Verse four. Because I want to give more time. To that next week. Lord willing. As joy. Is a major theme. And we have a joy verse here. That needs more than a few minutes.

I can give it here. At the end of this message. But I'm going to jump down. To verse five. Because I think. It's connection. To the theme of unity. Is undeniable. Verse five. Let your gentleness.

Be evident. To all. The Lord. Is near. In Ephesians. Chapter four. And verses two. And three. When Paul calls.

The Ephesian church. To make every effort. To keep the unity. Of the spirit. Through the bond of peace. He first tells them. Be completely. Humble.

[ 28 : 06 ] And gentle. That's how you keep. That's how you make. Every effort. To keep the unity. Of the. The spirit. In the bond of peace.

Be completely. Humble. And gentleness. And so we find. Gentleness. Going hand in hand. With humility. Not only here. In Ephesians four. But elsewhere.

In the Bible. Gentleness. And humility. They're found together. The man lacking. Gentleness. Is a very proud man.

For gentleness. Is what? It's humility. And action. Towards others. So humility. Is how we view ourselves. Under God.

I see. What I am. So humility. Is a right view. Of ourselves. But gentleness. Is how we treat others. And when I have. A humble view. Of myself.

- [ 29 : 01 ] I'll have a general. A gentle treatment. Of others. You see how these two. Connect. A gentle spirit. Is a powerful force. For unity. And I believe.
- That's why. Paul is calling for it. Here. In verse five. Now. This word. That. The NIV. Translates.
- Gentleness. In verse five. It's like a suitcase. That's packed full. You know. That there's not always. A word for word.
- Correspondence. Between languages. I saw that. In Colombia. That. One word. In English. Cannot always. Be translated. By one word. In Spanish.
- And context. Is critical. In knowing. Which words. In Spanish. To use. To translate. The one word. In English. And it's. There's this whole. Group of words.
- [ 29 : 59 ] That sometimes. In a different language. Are used. To translate. The one word. In a different language. And that's kind of. What we're looking at here.
- With this word. In the Greek. For gentleness. It's not the normal word. Used for gentleness. It's a different word. And it has many. Slightly different. Nuances. To it.
- It's translated. By many different words. That give us. This broad range. Of meaning. But as I read.
- These various. Translations. And. Explanations. You'll see. Just how closely. Related they are. They're all in this. Same word. Family. And I believe. As I read them.
- A clear picture. Will emerge. In your mind. I think you'll even. Start to think. Of real people. Who are like this. Because they all. Really are describing. The same. Spirit. So here they are.
- [ 30 : 53 ] Different ways. That this word. Is described. In the NIV. Let your gentleness. Be evident. To all. Or your forbearance. Your bearing. With others.
- Your goodwill. Your friendliness. Your kindness. Your big heartedness. Your gracious spirit. Your charitable judgment.
- Your sweet reasonableness. Easy to be entreated. Rather than quarrelsome. Stubborn. Or disagreeable. Readiness to forgive.
- Willingness to yield. Rather than to insist. On one's rights. Are you getting the picture? Of the kind of spirit. Being commanded. Us. By this.
- Word. Translated. Gentleness. Is it not found. To perfection. In Christ. Is that not. The painting. That's emerging. In your mind. Well that's the way.
- [ 31 : 51 ] Jesus is. We sing. Number 135. Around here. Thou hast. Speaking of Christ.
- Thou hast. The true. And perfect. Gentleness. No harshness. Hast thou. And no bitterness. Make us. To taste. The sweet grace.
- Found in you. And ever stay. In your sweet. Unity. Sweet grace. That produces.
- Sweet unity. That could be another translation. Of this word. A sweet. Graciousness. A gentle. And gracious.
- Spirit. It's interesting. That. Jesus is. Often described. As gentle. Even back in the Old Testament. Isaiah.
- [ 32 : 46 ] Describes him. He will. Tend his flock. Like a shepherd. He gathers the lambs. In his arms. And carries them. Close to his heart. He gently leads.
- Those that have young. Gently leads them. Gentle shepherd. Zechariah. Speaks of. The Lord Jesus. As a king. But he's a gentle king.
- Riding on a donkey. Paul. As he's. Beseeching. The Corinthians. Says.

I beseech you. By the. Meekness. And gentleness. Of Christ. And Jesus himself. When he would welcome.

Weary. Heavy laden sinners. To come to himself. Any people. With. Burdens. And weariness. What. How does he describe himself?

[ 33 : 40 ] Come to me. Why? Because I. I am. Gentle. And humble. In heart. And you'll find rest. For your soul.

If you come. This is Jesus. Gentle. Gracious. Who willing. More willing. To forgive. Than him. Who.

Who. More. Willing. To lay down. His rights. Than him. Who is God. And yet.

Did not demand. That he be treated. As God. But became a man. Became a nobody. A servant. Despised. And rejected. And died. Unjustly.

For sins. He had not committed. And suffered the wrath. Of God. For sins. That were not his own. But ours. Who. Believe. Jesus.

[ 34 : 39 ] You have the true. And perfect. Gentleness. The sweet grace. That's what we're looking at here. No. That's what it is. But notice what he says.

It's to be. Let this gracious attitude. This gentleness. Be evident. To all. Be known. To all. Not just to the folks at church.

But to your family at home. Because we can be gentle. At church. And harsh at home. We can be gentle. In public. And harsh. With individuals. In private. But the command.

Is to. Let your gentleness. Be evident. To all. Whether. Saved. Or lost. Whether. At church. Or at. At your workplace.

Or in the neighborhood. Or at the kids. Little league games. Let your gentleness. Be evident. To all. Let such a gracious spirit. So permeate.

[ 35 : 32 ] Your heart. Your mouth. And your interactions. With others. That it's known to everyone. Be famous for this. Be known for this.

Not for quarreling. And fighting. Among yourself. Not for insisting. On your rights. But for a sweet. Reasonableness. Easy to be entreated. A readiness. To yield. Your rights.

Be known for it. Let it be evident. To all. I met a pastor. In Colombia. From a very remote. Desert region. People are poor.

Goat. Herders. Living on rancheros. They have their own. Pagan religion. And unique cultures. They're somewhat isolated. From the rest of the country. And in their culture.

I found it interesting. That a man's word. Is huge. The honesty. Of a man's word. Was important. In that culture. In fact.

[ 36 : 27 ] In order to marry his wife. This brother. Had to pay. A sizable amount. Of money. To her father. To prove this very thing. The faithfulness. Of his word. To take care of her. Years later.

When God saved this man. His wife left him. For another man. And left him. With the five children. Now the culture requires.

That because she left him. Her father has to return. The money. That he gave to him. That's this pastor's right.

And with five kids. Boy could he use it. But this pastor. Had been treated with grace. By the Lord Jesus. Who had saved him. And that same gracious spirit.

Was now oozing out of him. I saw it. And so counter to the culture. And the nature of man. He sweetly yielded his rights.

- [ 37 : 28 ] And rather than insisting. Upon them. As his due. Didn't demand. That the money be returned. Though he is poor. Himself.
- Do I need to tell you that. His parents-in-law. Have been moved by that. And now they are. Offering.
- Themselves to help. Care. For the five children. His gentle and gracious spirit. Won them over. And that has been evident to all.
- That kind of word. Travels in a rancho. In a culture. Where it's. The rights. Of the man. To receive the money back. Forgave the debt. He yielded his rights. And the.
- [ 38 : 27 ] That sort of thing. Opens the doors. For the gospel message. About the son of God. Who. Himself. Did not insist. On his rights. As I just said. It opens the door. For the gospel.
- You can see that. How this gracious. Disposition. Invites. Peace. It spreads unity. Wherever it's found. And such a spirit. Would go far.
- In reconciling. You. Oda. And. Sintiki. Hence. The command. Immediately following. His words to them. Let this gracious. Evident. This gracious spirit.
- Be evident. To all. And its presence. In any congregation. Is cause for high praise. To the Lord. As it is Christ's own. Gracious gentleness.
- That is being formed. In us. That. Is the glory. Of the Christian. That is the glory. Of the church. The bride of Christ. As he is making her.
- [ 39 : 22 ] More and more. Like him. Getting out her spots. And wrinkles. One of the things. That will mark her. Is this gracious. Tender. Gentle.
- Spirit. Is your gentleness. Clear to everyone. Who knows you. Or knows about you. Well there's a command.
- That's the command. But there's also. A help given. A motivation. To help us. Obey this command. The Lord is near. Let your gentleness.
- Be evident to all. The Lord is near. You feel the help of that? The Lord's near. Now. It could mean.
- That the Lord is ever present. Watching all that you do. And that obviously. Will affect. How we treat each other. In the home. In the church. In the neighborhood. But I don't believe.
- [ 40 : 18 ] That's what he's referring to here. A spatial nearness. Of the Lord. But I rather. Believe he's referring to. The Lord's second coming. It's used that way.
- In James chapter 5. And verse 8. And. He has just said. In chapter 3. In verse 20. Just. I don't know. What is it? Six verses earlier.
- Seven verses earlier. Our citizenship. Is in heaven. And we are eagerly. Awaiting a savior. From there. Who by his. Power.
- That enables him. To bring everything. Under his control. Will. Transform our lowly bodies. Into his glorious body. And so forth. He's just been talking about. We're waiting for a savior. From there. And now.
- He's saying. He's coming. And he's at hand. So don't be found. Quarreling when he comes. Don't cling to your rights. Or take matters.
- [ 41 : 11 ] Into your own hands. To get justice now. For the Lord's coming. And he's coming to judge. In perfect righteousness. He'll vindicate his people. He'll right every wrong.
- So judge nothing. Before the appointed time. Wait till the Lord comes. He'll bring to light. What is hidden in darkness. And will expose the motives. Of men's heart. And at that time. Each will receive his praise.

From God. So whether it's. Persecution. From the world. Or mistreatment. Within the church. We're to remember. That the Lord is near.

And that should keep us. From losing our gentleness. Is it not true with you. As it is with me. That when. When I am not able. To get what I think. That I have a right to.

That I can very easily. Lose my gentleness. I might be gentle. And requesting it. The first. But when I'm not getting it. Well the gentleness. Can go out the door.

[ 42 : 06 ] And I'm going to get mad. To get what I. What I want. And this is the. This is the help. You see. That I need. John. Let your gentleness. Be evident to all.

Because the Lord is near. He's coming. It's not. It's not far. When you think of eternity. This is just a blink. And he's going to be here. And he's going to right. Every wrong.

So don't. Don't let anything. Any wrongdoing. Any injustice. Don't let it steal. Your gentleness. It didn't steal. Our Lord's gentleness.

When they hurled. Their insults at him. He did not retaliate. When he suffered. He made no threats. Instead. He entrusted himself. To him. Who judges. Justly. He was like a sheep.

Before her shears. Is dumb. So he opened. Not his mouth. Is the Lord. Who is my helper. And he will vindicate me. Isaiah 50. That's what was on Jesus heart.

[ 43 : 04 ] I can wait for him. And go on being gentle. And not take matters. Into my own. Hands. There's the help. Embrace it. Let your gentleness.

Be evident to all. The Lord is near. And that makes the gospel. Attractive. So may Christ. Receive glory.

In his church. By such a Christ like. Spirit. Being evident to all. And here's a reason.

For every one of us. To come to Christ. Whoever we are. And whatever our need. Because he's gentle. And that's what he says. In Matthew 11.

He says. Come to me. Now whether you've come. A thousand times before. Are you in need? You who are weary. And heavy laden. Heavy burdened.

[ 43 : 58 ] You know. You can be a Christian. And be weary. And burdened. So here's the invitation. Come to me. You who are weary. And burdened. Maybe some of you. Are weary and burdened.

Because you've never come to Christ. And you don't have your sins forgiven. You've got a big burden. You've got a lot of guilt. You're going to face. A holy judge one day. And you've got a burden.

Of sin. Then you need to come. Jesus says. Come to me. All you. Who are weary. And burdened. And I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you. And learn from me. Now why should I come to this Jesus? Why should I take his yoke upon me? Why should I learn from him? He tells us.

Because I am gentle. And humble in heart. And if you come to me. You'll find rest. For your soul. Rest for your guilt. Your sin. Burden.

[ 44 : 51 ] I'll take it right off. For whoever believes on. The Lord Jesus Christ. Will be saved. We'll see how.

It might be the burden of anxiety. And Paul's going to deal with that. Come. Bring your anxiety. Your worries to Jesus. Bring your petitions. All the things that concern you. Bring them to Jesus.

Cast your cares upon him. Why? Because he is a gentle. And a humble. Savior. We saw the description.

By Isaiah. Zechariah. Apostle Paul. I ask you. Who know the Lord Jesus. As your Lord and Savior. Have you not found him. To be just that. To you. With all your burdens.

That you've come. And brought to him. Haven't you. He's not kicking you. While you're down. He's not scolding you. Oh he disciplines you. But it's always in love. It's.

[ 45 : 48 ] Hasn't he been gentle. With you. Doesn't he have the perfect. Gentleness. He's not been harsh. With us. It's been that sweet grace.

Come to him. Whatever you need. And he promises. You rest. Because he's gentle. And humble. In heart. Well we're going to sing.

Two songs. To conclude. I'm going to sing. Oh how good it is. When the family of God. Dwells together. In unity. That's right. Out of Psalm 133.

How good. And pleasant it is. This is a grace. That God has. Poured upon his church. Through the Holy Spirit. One of the fruits. Of which. Is gentleness. And so.

We're singing. Of. How good. This grace. Of gentleness is. And then. We're going to sing. One verse. Of may the mind. Of Christ. My Savior. Live in me. From day to day.

[ 46 : 43 ] Because. How will this. Gentle mind. Become mine. If it's not. From my Savior. My gentle Savior. And so we're going to pray. Lord may.

Your mind. Be in me. The same mind. That you have. Be in me. So. Let's stand as we sing. Oh how good it is. That is our prayer.

Father. Son. And Holy Spirit. That the same love. That you enjoyed. With each other. For all eternity. Would now be our love. For you. Yes. Father.

For you. Yes. Lord Jesus. And you. Yes. Holy Spirit. But also for. Your. People. Our brothers. And sisters. And.

And. The people. That you've made. That have not yet. Come to Christ. And so. Fill us. With this. Gentle love. That we have experienced.

[ 47 : 43 ] From you. We thank you. That you command. Nothing of us. But what by your grace. You are ready. To equip us for. It's that.

That we look to you for. In Jesus name. And for your glory. Amen. Amen.