

LESSON 3
UNITED WITH A CAUSE
Philippians 1:27—2:11



1 List two or three examples of people who have become united for an important cause.

2 What has been the most unified team of which you have been a part? What built the unity?



Read Philippians 1:27—2:11 and the following notes:

☐ 1:29 ☐ 1:30 ☐ 2:1–5 ☐ 2:3 ☐ 2:4 ☐ 2:5–11

3 In a cosmopolitan city like Philippi, what differences among believers could have made it difficult to preserve unity in the church?

4 What external opposition might the Philippian church have been facing?

5 Why would the fearlessness of Christians be taken as a sign (a bad omen) by their opponents?

6 What does 2:5–11 tell us about who Christ is and what he did?

7 What essential characteristics of Christ’s attitude does Paul challenge us to have?



Paul challenges the church at Philippi to be unified for the cause of Christ, refusing to act out of self-centeredness or pride. This unity would come if each believer followed the example of Christ, who gave up everything to die for them. Christlike humility is the key to unity. The more we are committed to Christ and to living like him, the more we will be committed to each other. As a result, we will be able to face opposition and hardship, and we will be able to advance the cause of Christ in the world.

8 What might be the consequences, both good and bad, of a person’s neglecting his or her own needs and concentrating instead on meeting the needs of others?

9 Why should unity be an important goal for any church?



10 What influences in our culture reinforce our attitudes of self-importance and self-interest? What can the church do to counter these?

11 What are potentially the most divisive issues facing your church? What could you do to help resolve those internal tensions?

12 How do you explain the apparent lack of sacrifice, suffering, and service in many churches today? What can believers do to change this situation?

13 Which causes unify your church? For which causes would you like to see your church unified in the future?

14 What barriers to unity have you noticed in your church?

15 What steps can you take to help unify your church? Who might be able to help you in this process?



A Paul uses the phrase “fighting together” from Greek athletic games to describe how Christians should work together. Why is this an appropriate description?

B What are the most common forms of opposition facing the church today? How well is the church responding?

C What did Christ give up to become a human? What is the significance of Jesus’ dying a criminal’s death on the cross?

D At the final judgment, what will be the experience of those who have rejected Christ?

E If you need to make a sacrifice to be closer to Christ, what might you have to give up? What is stopping you from making that sacrifice? What does this suggest about your values?

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