

Relational Harmony

Philippians: Fighting for Joy

2021-01-31 by Ben Deaver at Tallgrass Church on Philippians 4:1-3

CG Flow:

- Joy of the Lord (5 min.)
- Jesus, We Love You (5 min.)
- Dismiss to Sprouts & Mingle (5 min.)
- Pray over Ricky & Renberg (5 min.)
- Preach (35 min.)
- Living Hope (5 min.)
- Post It Notes and White Board (5 min.)
- I Surrender All (5 min.)
- Lord's Supper & Benediction (5 min.)

Joy of the Lord + Jesus We Love You

Announcements:

- Our AFC Championship Score Prediction winner is Dan & Stephanie Chitwood with a prediction of 33-27 Chiefs! That was very close to the actual score of 38-24 Chiefs. The Chitwoods win a Starbucks gift card...but I have a feeling that Stephanie will use the bulk of this gift card.
- Guys Groups & Ladies' Nights
- Grab bread and juice for the Lord's Supper and a Post-it Note for an activity we'll do later.

Mingle Question: How are you doing on any 2021 goals you've set?

Pray and dismiss to Sprouts and intro Mingle

Ricky Greeve and David Renberg are rotating off the Elder Team

- These men have been fighting alongside me for joy personally for a long time now.
- Ricky has served as an Elder since the beginning of Tallgrass Church. He and Ron Goodman were Elders of Tallgrass Church along with Dave Geldart and me starting January 1st, 2018. We planted Tallgrass Church on April 8th, 2018.
- Ricky has faithfully and sacrificially served these last three years.
- David Renberg was invited onto the Tallgrass Elder Team in August of 2018. He has faithfully and sacrificially served these last two and a half years.
- Both of these men were ready for a break from leadership months ago but stayed on the Elder Team longer than they might have because...Covid. You know, we're still in this pandemic.
- But they along with their families have both decided that it's really time for a break now.

Tallgrass Leadership

- There are always need for more leaders to be raised up within the church but sometimes those leadership vacuums are felt more than other times. This is one of those times where we have a leadership vacuum which gives great opportunity for new leaders to emerge.
- We invite you to give us Elder recommendations! We're always inviting and discussing future Elder recommendations.
- To do this you can talk with a current Elder or email us at elders@tallgrass.church. But first! Read through our Elder Qualifications.
- Elder Qualifications: <https://tallgrass.church/elder-qualifications>
- My heart is filled with gratitude for these men and their families and their years of laboring for Tallgrass Church.
- Join me in praying over Ricky Greeve and David Renberg and their families not just now but in the weeks and months ahead.

Let's pray!

- **Psalm 90:17** Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!
- **Philippians 1:3-11** ³I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.
- **Matthew 9:36-38** ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Philippians: Fighting for Joy

- Last Sunday I tried to address everyone but it was maybe an especially helpful teaching for skeptics of the Resurrection. This morning may be especially helpful for cynics of the Christian community.

Three Types of Doubt:

Don't fear doubt. Be a lifelong learner. Don't shelter yourself but equip yourself. Defeat doubt and feed your faith!

1. **Intellectual Doubt**—Deals with our mind—the right brain specifically. Objective evidence is very helpful here. Are there good reasons to consider the claims of the Christian faith? Get your facts straight!
2. **Emotional Doubt**—Deals with the left brain, your emotions. Encounter the Risen Jesus! Subjective evidence is helpful here. Deals with our pain and feelings of guilt and shame. Dig into your soul! There is a lot of hurt and pain caused by people who either call themselves Christians and/or who connect themselves to a church.
3. **Volitional Doubt**—Deals with our will. CHOOSE to take the next step of faith. You've got to choose to take the step you know you should. Stop being stubborn! Repent. Can I say that, in love? I love you! But you're here for a reason. Take the step!
 - Our *I Surrender...* activity may be good for some struggling with Volitional Doubt.
 - Non-Christian, what would it take to convince you that Jesus really died, was buried, and rose again?
 - Do you come to the Bible already convinced that the supernatural cannot be real?

Modern "Faith" = belief despite evidence "Take a blind leap of faith."

Biblical Faith = reasoned response based on solid evidence "Take a step of faith where the evidence leads."

- Last Sunday was National Compliment Day! Paul's good at giving compliments.
- He says, "Therefore, in light of the life and death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, you are my joy, you are my crown!!!"
- And from those building-up-the-Body-of-Christ compliments he can then challenge them to "stand firm in the Lord!"
- The next few weeks we'll talk about Paul's strategies for standing firm in Christ. How do we "let our manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ" as mentioned in Philippians 1:27?
- This is where mere lip service about theological truths goes into practice in real life relationships.
- This is where the proverbial rubber meets the road.
 - Striving for unity
 - Battling anxiety
 - Cultivating gratitude
 - Feeding the mind
- I've never heard a sermon on this passage before although I've heard many on the following few verses.

Philippians 4:1-3 ¹Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved. ²I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

PRAY!

“..agree in the Lord...”-Relational Harmony

- Euodia and Syntyche are two women in the church who have relational dissonance and need resolution, not just for their own sakes but for the sake of that local church, and also for the sake of the watching world!
- Fellow Christ-followers need to battle for agreement, for sure for relational harmony.
 - Is this referring to relational or doctrinal agreement?
 - Probably relational agreement/unity/peace. Why?
 - Wouldn't Paul correct it if it was doctrinal and he was taking the time to write to them about it?
 - Wouldn't he have addressed the elders in Philippi if it was a doctrinal issue?
 - Paul asks someone to help these women agree in the Lord. It sounds like a relational issue.
 - Petagaye brought up the issue of peacemaking between people when we were all on Zoom together. Remember that?
- “...agree in the Lord...” ESV/CSB “...live in harmony in the Lord...” NASB
 - Strong's 5426—See also Philippians 1:7; 2:2 (2x), 5; 3:15 (2x), 19; 4:2, 10 (2x)
 - **Philippians 2:2** ...complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.
 - **Philippians 2:5** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus
 - “...in the Lord...” means this will take a supernatural source for relational unity/peace.
- Have Peter come up to demonstrate dissonance and resolution.

Dissonance and Resolution

- Music analogy: Dissonance is beautiful in the context of resolution. Remember *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor* by Bach?
- What a difficult challenge and yet beautiful thing when someone loves their enemy! And we are called to love our enemy.
 - **Matthew 5:43-44a** ⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ^{44a}But I say to you, Love your enemies...
 - See also Luke 6:27.
- But I would argue that it's an even more difficult challenge and beautiful thing when we learn to love one another within the church and as fellow Christ-followers.
- **John 13:34-35** ³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”
 - The Gospel of John was written after the other Gospels.

- I'm envisioning the Apostles observing what's occurred and occurring in the early churches and then scanning all the teachings of Jesus. They must've thought that His teaching to love your enemies was the most difficult to live out but when push comes to shove loving one another within the Body of Christ is even more difficult.
- **John 17:20-23** ²⁰"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.
- **1 John 2:7-11 CSB** ⁷Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old command that you have had from the beginning. The old command is the word you have heard. ⁸Yet I am writing you a new command, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. ⁹The one who says he is in the light but hates his brother or sister is in the darkness until now. ¹⁰The one who loves his brother or sister remains in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. ¹¹But the one who hates his brother or sister is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and doesn't know where he's going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.
- **2 John 1:5** And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another.
- **Matthew 5:9** Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
- **Hebrews 12:12-15** ¹²Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, ¹³and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. ¹⁴Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled...
- **Galatians 5:13-15** ¹³For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

Real life experience of pain within the church:

- Josh's comments two Friday mornings ago
- Lewis responding to the Spirit to keep pursuing me in friendship
- So much hurt and pain over the years
- My deepest hurts and pains have been caused by those in the church. And I anticipate this will continue to be the case into the next decade of my life. And I am sticking with the church? Am I glutton for punishment? Or is it worth it? Is there more going on here?
- Do you have any hurt and pain from relationships within the church? Or maybe from observing others' hurt and pain from those relationships?
 - I'm so sorry for your hurt and pain.
 - I'm so sorry for the hurt and pain I've caused people.
 - If this hurt and pain is preventing you from taking steps towards relational harmony then that's in the emotional doubt category.

“true companion”—Sometimes a mediator or peacemaker is needed in relationships.

“labored side by side with me in the gospel”—The Phalanx!

- We’ll spend eternity with these relationships. Get to work on them NOW!
- Intimate relationships within the church is one of the main reasons we planted Tallgrass Church in the first place.

Bullet Points from our February 18, 2018 Launch Team Meeting

Why should we/people go to Tallgrass? Our Launch Team developed four main reasons: 1) Intimacy, 2) Get out of our comfort zones!, 3) Neighboring, and 4) Equipping

1. **Intimacy.** Tallgrassians want a grace-centered place to grow in relationship with Christ and others! We want a safe place where leaders speak truth in love, where there is close-knit community, a family, meaningful relationships. Where people can come and be known. Desire for intimacy.
 - Meaningful relationships
 - Family
 - Easy to be embraced, to feel loved well
 - Hospitality—being accommodating
 - Authenticity
 - Want to be seen
 - Eyes open, ears open
 - Humility
 - People
 - Living life with people
 - Be loved well
 - Community
 - Support
 - People who helped them get excited about the Lord
 - Home

Cultural Challenges to Relational Harmony in the Church

- Why is it so hard to sit in the dissonance until resolution can occur?
- Challenges to relational harmony within the church:
 - Consumerism
 - So many options
 - Lack of relational grit/moxie
 - Technology
 - Pandemic

Homework:

First, who do you need to seek relational harmony with? And what's the first step you'll take today?

- What's your one scary step of faith you can take towards relational harmony with someone? Explain why "scary" step of faith.
- **See A Peacemaker's Checklist resource**—Appendix A in "The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict" by Ken Sande

Four Steps towards Relational Harmony:

1. Glorify God
2. Get the log out
3. Gently restore
4. Go and be reconciled

Whenever you are involved in a conflict, you may apply the four basic principles of peacemaking by asking yourself these questions:

1. *Glorify God:* How can I please and honor the Lord in this situation?
Philippians 4:2 "...agree in the Lord..."
 Relational harmony takes a miracle!
2. *Get the log out of your eye:* How can I show Jesus' work in me by taking responsibility for my contribution to this conflict?
Matthew 7:5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.
 Are you self-aware enough to see the log in your own eye? Or to ask about the log?
3. *Gently restore:* How can I lovingly serve others by helping them take responsibility for their contribution to this conflict?
Galatians 6:1a CSB Brothers and sisters, if someone is overtaken in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual, restore such a person with a gentle spirit...
 Tender strength!
4. *Go and be reconciled:* How can I demonstrate forgiveness of God and encourage a reasonable solution to this conflict?
Matthew 5:24b CSB First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.
 Ultimate relational harmony is still to come!

Second, what will you surrender to the King this morning?

- Last week we talked about surrendering to King Jesus and taking refuge in Him and rejoicing in Him!
- **Psalm 5:11** But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever sing for joy, and spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may exult in you.
- Each person who would like to participate should have a Post-it Note.
- Write something that you need to and are surrendering to the King, King Jesus. You can include your name if you'd like or leave it anonymous.
- Then come place it on the whiteboard as an act of surrender.
- Examples: I Surrender...
 - The way I gossip about others
 - The need to be right in this relationship
 - The bitterness I've been harboring
 - My addiction to my phone

Imagine how beautiful the music will be in eternity when all dissonance is resolved in Christ!
Now's the time to practice relational harmony with one another...even today!

PRAY!

Then sing Living Hope

I Surrender... Activity

- Each person who would like to participate should have a Post-it Note.
- Write something that you need to and are surrendering to the King, King Jesus. You can include your name if you'd like or leave it anonymous.
- Then come place it on the whiteboard as an act of surrender.

Sing I Surrender All

Conclude with the Lord's Supper w/ Benediction

- Consider the dissonance and resolution we see on the cross.
- Justice and mercy perfectly on display.
- Just when Satan thought he had the upper hand...when the dissonance was at it's greatest, God the Father resolved the tension in the sacrificial death of His Son. Then Jesus rose again three days later. We'll celebrate the Resurrection again on Easter Sunday, April 4th.
- This morning, when we break the bread and drink the juice we do this in remembrance of Christ and His sacrifice on our behalf. And we also do this in recognition of the forgiveness we are to offer one another having received forgiveness ourselves.
- Let's pray.
- On the night Jesus was betrayed He said, "Do this in remembrance of me."

The Chopping Block:

Facebook Live Description:

Join us in person or online for Church in the Club! 10am Sunday mornings at the Boys & Girls Club of Manhattan or right here!

“Relational Harmony”

Philippians 4:1-3

January 31, 2021

Ben Deaver

WEB: <http://tallgrass.church>

INSTAGRAM: <https://www.instagram.com/tallgrasschurch/>

YOUTUBE: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0drX4wrsE5n9yLza8HSNIQ>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/tallgrasschurch>

Because God first loved you, you exist to love God and love your neighbors!

PROBABLY PUSHED TO NEXT WEEK:

Euodia and Syntyche—Women in the Church

- Wikipedia on Euodia and Syntyche: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euodia_and_Syntyche
- Paul calls them out by name in a letter to be read to the whole church. This is a significant issue.
- They need to practice putting others’ interests above their own. See Phil. 2:2.
- This is an opportunity to live out Phil. 2:1-5.
 - So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus...
- From Gary DeLashmutt—Euodia and Syntyche were probably embroiled in a dispute about some temporal issue – possibly a political dispute. By referring to Christians as having their “names being written in the book of life,” Paul reminds them that their common citizenship in God’s eternal kingdom outweighs whatever other differences they have.^[3] He thus urges them on that basis to live in harmony “in the Lord.”
- Paul doesn’t silence these women. Doesn’t have them separate. Encourages them to work through things.
- This is significant. Women are not to be silenced in the church.
- Complementarian vs. Egalitarian
- These women have labored side by side with Paul in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of Paul’s fellow workers. Side by side! Mutual submission. Laboring together. All of these folks have

their names in the book of life. They have equal standing positionally before Christ AND equal standing as laborers in the church!

- “fellow workers”
 - Priscilla and Aquila (Rom. 16:3, 9), Timothy (Rom. 16:21; 1 Thess. 3:2, Titus (2 Cor. 8:23), Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25), Philemon (Philem. 1), Mark (Philem. 24), and Luke (Philem. 24).
 - Euodia and Synteche may be among the “overseers and deacons” of Phil. 1:1 but the text doesn’t demand this be the case.
 - Paul considers himself a servant. Authority belongs to Christ...but anyone can exercise leadership.
- The Christian in Complete Armor* by William Gurnall, Puritan minister, 700 page treatise written in 1655**
- “In heaven we shall appear not in armour but in robes of glory; but here they (the pieces of armour specified) are to be worn night and day; we must walk, work and sleep in them, or else to stand and watch, and never relax our vigilance, for ‘the saint’s sleeping time is Satan’s tempting time.’”
 - You do well to put on the armor of God, brothers and sisters.
 - You do well to put help one another put on the armor of God and keep it on, brothers and sisters.
 - 4:2-3 ²I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have **labored side by side** with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.
 - true companion; side by side
 - *suzugos* (σύζυγος, 4805)—yokefellow; colleague
 - 4866—See 2:27

Notes:

- Chapters 1-3 to chapter 4—We’ve had three chapters of indicatives and now we get some imperatives. We transition from orthodoxy to orthopraxy.
- Φρονέω—phronéō (from 5424 /phrén, “the midriff or diaphragm; the parts around the heart,” J. Thayer) – properly, regulate (moderate) from within, as inner-perspective (insight) shows itself in corresponding, outward behavior. 5426 (phronéō) essentially equates to personal opinion fleshing itself out in action (see J. Thayer). This idea is difficult to translate into English because it combines the visceral and cognitive aspects of thinking.
- Other translations
 - “live in harmony in the Lord” NASB
 - “be of the same mind” NIV/KJV
 - “iron out their differences and make up. God doesn’t want his children holding grudges.” MSG
 - “Syzygus” for “true companion”
- Matthew written between 68-85 AD. Mark written between 64-70 AD. Luke written between late-50s to 70 AD. John was written between 70-150 AD (at the earliest and latest). Remarkable consensus of scholarly opinion that John was published somewhere between 80-100 AD.
- Ed Stetzer article on QAnon
- St. Augustine quote—“In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.”
 - <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/essentials-unity-non-essentials-liberty-all-things/>
- Burden that vents through prayer.
- Paul’s humility
- Silence doesn’t equal peace.

- Maris thinks we need to step out of our comfort zones and talk more about hard things.
- Connection between the Resurrection, the imperishable seed through the eternal Word of God, and loving one another earnestly from a pure heart...
 - **1 Peter 1:10-12** ¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.
 - **1 Peter 1:13-21** ¹³ Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” ¹⁷ And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸ knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. ²⁰ He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you ²¹ who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.
 - **1 Peter 1:22-25** ²² Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ²⁴ for
 “All flesh is like grass
 and all its glory like the flower of grass.
 The grass withers,
 and the flower falls,
²⁵ but the word of the Lord remains forever.”
 And this word is the good news that was preached to you.
- 2021 Daily Holidays that fall on January 31, include:
 - National Backward Day
 - National Eat Brussels Sprouts Day
 - National Hot Chocolate Day

Bullet Points from our February 18, 2018 Launch Team Meeting

Why should we/people go to Tallgrass?

1. **Intimacy.** Tallgrassians want a grace-centered place to grow in relationship with Christ and others! We want a safe place where leaders speak truth in love, where there is close-knit community, a family, meaningful relationships. Where people can come and be known. Desire for intimacy.
 - Meaningful relationships
 - Family
 - How easy to be embraced, to feel loved well

- Hospitality—being accommodating
- Authenticity
- Want to be seen
- Eyes open, ears open
- Humility
- People
- Living life with people
- Be loved well
- Community
- Support
- People who helped them get excited about the Lord
- Home

2. ~~Comfort zone!~~ At the same time, we want to get out of our comfort zones! We want disruption, a growth mindset, to be a part of something bigger than ourselves, to be a part of God’s thing, see the Holy Spirit move, high commitment, freedom to fail, messiness. Desire for growth.

- Embrace the awkward
- Microministry/discipleship
- Do church differently
- Organic; tangible Kingdom in everyday life; genuine Christians
- Comfort with rough edges
- Bigger than us—Kingdom work
- Kick in the pants—unknown
- Out of comfort zone
- Excited to see God working
- Plan B—What God has in mind
- Have fun
- Opportunity
- People pursuing the Lord, intentional, knowing God, not just “playing church”
- Something bigger than ourselves
- People growing and meeting people in Christ
- Big picture

3. Neighboring. Reach communities, neighborhoods, multiplication at all levels, diversity, generations

- Making/Having time in life
- Reclaiming neighborhoods
- Championing orphans
- Vision to serve people outside church
- Making disciples
- Excited to be looking at neighborhoods differently
- Availability-accessible to people
- Embracing others
- Love our neighbors, impact people for Christ

4. Equipping. Teaching, every member a minister, active participants (not passive observers), invest in parents, marriages, spiritual gifts, holistic health (mental, emotional, physical, spiritual)

- Logistical needs—reducing barriers of entry, parking, food, etc.
- Leadership
- Knowledge
- Good teaching
- Willing to take stances on things, admonish well, keep accountable, love well
- Personal growth, expectation of learning
- Growth mentality

Homework:

What's your one calculated scary step of faith? Explain why "scary" step of faith.

1. Are you battling with intellectual doubt? Get your facts straight! Encounter the Resurrection in history.

- Want to dig deeper into this? Ask me!
- *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus* by Gary Habermas and Michael Licona

2. Are you battling with emotional doubt? Dig into your soul! Encounter the Resurrection TODAY!

- Pray
 - Call out to God! Why wouldn't you call out to God and see if He answers you? Are you scared? What's the worst thing that happens? Nothing, then your suspicions are confirmed that God is not there or if He is there He's silent. Maybe you're scared that God will answer you in some way. Now that would be something, wouldn't it?
 - Ask God to show up and give you a Prophetic Promise.
- Talk—Talk to someone. I'd love to sit with you and help you take the next right step.
- Baptism—Maybe you've come to a point of belief in Jesus and need to take the plunge of baptism.
- *Sexual Integrity: 101*
- Begin (or continue) Discipleship 101!
- 2021 WOTYs
- Reading the *Whole Bible Under 2 Years*
 - There's almost 40 of us in this reading plan together.
 - The questions and comments have been great.
- Memorize and meditate on Philippians 3:20-21.

²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

3. Are you battling volitional doubt? Stop being stubborn! Choose to take the next right step of faith in Christ TODAY!

- Take a calculated yet scary step of faith. Don't delay!

4. Are you excited about the Resurrection? Share this Good News with someone, like Paul did.

- Why do you believe what you believe? What's your defense for your hope?
- Who will you go and tell what you know? Tell friends and family to listen to this talk.
- Just plant a seed. Water a seed. God causes the growth. Pressure's off. This can be exciting, especially in the context of a loving community like ours.

Have _____ share with us!

My Prophetic Promises

Encounter with God/ Who You Are!	The Defining Passage	The Limbic Lie From Hell	The Prophetic Promise
Watching "Luther" and sharing it with EmmaHouse friends at the Stone Barn (2004?)	1 Thess. 1:5 ...because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.	You're a maverick. You're the problem. You shouldn't bring who you are.	You're a man of conviction who God is using to bring the gospel in word in power in the Holy Spirit and in full conviction.
Holding the lamb in China (summer of 2005)	Ps 23:1 The Lord is my shepherd...	God doesn't really care about you. He's too busy taking care of the other sheep and so are His undershepherds.	I care so very much about YOU!
Utilizing Romans 8:1 to battle for peace in the middle of the night. (2009-2011)	Rom. 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.	You're worthless!	There's no condemnation.
Exodus 14:13-14 hitting me hard when doing Soul Care with Ken Goodyear. (Fall of 2017)	Ex. 14:13b-14 ^{13b} "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."	You have to figure things out on your own. You're alone.	God is the Way Maker!
Watching the monarch butterfly Lula emerge from its cocoon. (9/6/14—9/17/14)	2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.	You'll be sunk by anxiety like others before you. It's just a matter of time before something bad happens.	I'm a NEW creation! I'm being transformed.
Walking at the Konza when God said, "You've done enough!" (4/29/20)	Matt. 25:21, 23 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of	You've squandered and wasted your life. You had so much potential but didn't live up to it because of your fear of failure.	Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.

	your master.”		
Time at St. Benedict’s Abbey—“relational capacity” and “allow others to love you” (10/24/19—10/25/19)	Luke 7:47 “Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”		

In Essentials Unity, In Non-Essentials Liberty, In All Things Charity

by Mark Ross

Philip Schaff, the distinguished nineteenth-century church historian, calls the saying in our title “the watchword of Christian peacemakers” (*History of the Christian Church*, vol. 7, p. 650). Often attributed to great theologians such as Augustine, it comes from an otherwise undistinguished German Lutheran theologian of the early seventeenth century, Rupertus Meldenius. The phrase occurs in a tract on Christian unity written (circa 1627) during the Thirty Years War (1618–1648), a bloody time in European history in which religious tensions played a significant role. The saying has found great favor among subsequent writers such as Richard Baxter, and has since been adopted as a motto by the Moravian Church of North America and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Might it serve us well as a motto for every church and for every denomination today?

Unity

Those who are united by faith in Christ are thereby united to one another in the church, the body of Christ. We call this union the communion of saints. It is a mysterious thing, and to understand it properly we will need to see it both in its “now” and “not yet” aspects. Because it is a union created by Christ in baptizing us all by one Spirit into His body, the church (1 Cor. 12:12–13), it is true of all Christians now, a fait accompli. But the manifestation of that unity is not always apparent. Christians can display ugly divisions between one another, as at the church of Corinth (1:10–17). Their disunity could be seen in the public square as members sued one another before the ungodly in civic courts (6:1–8). Even the Lord’s Supper was not sufficient to bring them together in love and unity (11:17–34). Manifesting fully the unity in Christ that already is given to us belongs to the “not yet” perfection of the faith that will come at our glorification. With deep longing our Lord prayed for our unity, knowing that on it rests our own blessing and the credibility of the church’s witness for Christ (John 17:20–23).

Liberty

Tensions arising from diversity of belief and practice among Christians are already apparent in the pages of the New Testament and remain with us today. There was apparently a thriving vegetarian faction within the church at Rome (Rom. 14). “One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables” (v. 2). There was also a difference among them about whether certain days were to be honored (v. 5). How do we live with such differences among us? Paul says, “As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions” (v. 1). Such a person is to be welcomed, says Paul, and not just welcomed for the purpose of quarreling with him over his views. Love for such a person, weak in faith though he is, must continue.

In that love, we must extend liberty to each person to hold fast to his own conscience on what Christ has commanded (Rom. 14:5); but how far can that liberty be extended? Apparently, it would extend far enough to include vegetarians and those who maintained that Christians should continue to honor the Jewish feast days. But would it also include baptists receiving into church membership people with paedobaptist convictions, or paedobaptists receiving members with baptist convictions? Should

believers who hold to a corporeal presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper admit to the table those who believe the real presence of Christ in the Supper is spiritual and not corporeal? After two thousand years of church history, Christians are still divided on many key doctrinal issues, even on the very signs of our unity in Christ — baptism and the Lord's Supper. How, then, can we be one in Christ and demonstrate the communion of saints? It would seem that either we must ignore our doctrinal differences and treat them as inconsequential, or we must remain permanently divided and in opposition to one another until Christ returns. Is there not a more excellent way? (1 Cor. 12:31).

Charity

Love for Christ must include a love for His truth, and so we can never treat as inconsequential anything that Christ has commanded. Only those who abide in Jesus' word are truly His disciples (John 8:31), and disciples are to be taught to obey all that He has commanded (Matt. 28:19–20). So the route that we might call doctrinal minimalism is not open to us. We cannot simply reduce the number of doctrines to be taught and believed to what we can all accept as important and ignore the rest. Movement in that direction always seems to lose its brakes and eventually nothing distinctive of Christianity remains. But neither can we lock ourselves up in very small groups with maximal agreement on doctrine and morals, and then separate from others and refuse to acknowledge as Christians those who do not embrace all our distinctives. The multiplication of small groups who pride themselves on purity but who denounce and despise those who fall short of that standard does nothing to express the truth of "the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church" for which Christ died. The love we must have for all of Christ's disciples has no expression in this path. Where, then, is the more excellent way?

As we have observed above, the unity that we have is by the Spirit of Christ baptizing us into Christ and into His body, the church (1 Cor. 12:12–13). Our expression of that unity must therefore be a unity of the truth "as the truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21). Ultimately, that will be all the truth that is in Jesus, but our unity with Jesus does not wait until that perfection is achieved. Salvation comes to us by faith in Christ, so there must be a defining core of truth that is ours in faith, sufficient to unite us to Christ even if not yet complete in all its detail. Defining this core precisely might prove to be as difficult as living out the whole truth faithfully, but it will surely include that God, the creator of heaven and earth against whom we have all sinned, was in Christ, reconciling to Himself all who believe in Him, not counting their sins against them, but forgiving them through the redemption that is found in the sinless life and atoning death of Christ and received by faith alone, calling for obedience to Christ as Lord under the authority of His Word in the Holy Scriptures. Where Christ is truly preached, there is the gospel; and where the gospel is truly believed, there is the church.

Yet as we have seen, the church that is in Jesus is a diverse church. This diversity among Christians is due to our lack of conformity to Christ. He has chosen to sanctify us gradually in this world. As the progress we make in sanctification varies both in doctrine and in practice, there will always be a need in this world for those who are united in Christ to live in love with one another while dealing with differences. Sometimes these differences result in the formation of different churches and denominations in order to maintain a good conscience toward God. But such divisions need not be a defeat of unity among us, so long as we do not permit them to destroy our love and welcome for one another in Christ. Some divisions are of practical necessity anyway, for not all Christians in the world can meet together at the same time in the same place.

Many distinct gatherings of Christians spread throughout the world can actually serve the purposes of God, by sprinkling us among the lost to shine the light of Christ. Our multiple groupings can also serve us well, encouraging us to be faithful to what we believe Christ has taught us, bringing us together with those with whom we can cooperate most fully. But if we allow our divisions to become breaches of love

and occasions for pride and rivalry, then we will have failed in our calling, and our witness for Christ will be marred.

The saying of Rupertus Meldenius strikes the right balance. It calls for unity on the essential things, the core of truth in our union with Christ. In non-essentials (not the unimportant, but those things that if lacking do not prevent our union with Christ), it calls for liberty so that all might follow their consciences under the Word and Spirit. In all things, however, there must be love (“charity” from the Latin *caritas*, or “love”), “which binds everything together in perfect harmony” (Col. 3:14).

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God (Rom. 15:5–7).

1/31 (5th Sunday)

- Take the Lord’s Supper together!
- Kansas Day was January 29th. Kansas turned 160 years old! Happy birthday, Kansas!

2/7—Do not be anxious!

^{4:4} Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

2/14 (Valentine’s Day!)—With thanksgiving!

^{4:4} Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

2/21

^{4:8} Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

- Revisit imitation/discipleship
- *No Silver Bullets: Five Small Shifts that will Transform Your Ministry* by Daniel Im
- Bible Reading—<https://lifewayresearch.com/2019/07/02/few-protestant-churchgoers-read-the-bible-daily/>

2/28—Zoom Only?!?!

^{4:10} I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹ Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹² I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

3/7

¹⁴ Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵ And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. ¹⁶ Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. ¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. ¹⁸ I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

3/14

¹⁹ And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. ²⁰ To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

²¹ Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. ²² All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.