



REFLECTIONS

August 4, 2019

I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel,

Philippians 4:2-3 NKJV

Being of Same Mind

Apostle Paul didn't describe the issue Euodia and Syntyche quarreled about. We only know he implored them to be of the same mind. It is notable that Paul chose not to take sides in the matter perhaps because the quarrel focused more on priority differences than on principles. One party may have advocated something like more fellowship in the church while the other might argue for more worship time. Either idea may have contributed to church growth. So, Paul called them to resolve the matter between them, still recognizing their aligned hearts for Jesus.

Even with people we love and with whom we share the love of Christ, disagreements are often brewing. James wrote on the subject: *“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”* (James 4:1-3)

James decries self-serving truths about us all; but in times of conflict, we are called to seek restoration. *Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,* (Philippians 2:4-5 NRSV) Or as Stephen Covey has more recently explained, “Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”¹ And if we are not a party to the conflict, Paul urges us to help those who are:

And [the Lord God] has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. (2 Corinthians 5:19-20) So, *If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.* (Philippians 2:1-2) Now, isn't *being one in spirit and purpose* the definition of “being of the same mind”?

“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.” It's a good first step toward reconciliation and it's an essential ingredient for being of the same mind. Look at the matter through the other person's eyes, not to agree or disagree with their position, but to see it from their perspective. Then as Paul encourages, we will *“Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ,”* (Galatians 6:2)

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Richard +

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¹ 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Dr. Stephen Covey

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