

Program: SS Panel 2026 1 Q

Quarterly title: Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philippians and Colossians

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Lesson Title: #04 Unity Through Humility

Day Title: Tuesday - Disunity in Philippi

For Lesson Dates: *January 17–23, 2026*

Record date: October 20, 2025

Note: This color and font = quarterly text

Note: This color and font = John Dinzey notes
ohn Dinzey 2026 Q1 L04. Disunity in Philippi

Next Week # 5 Shining as Lights in the Night

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Question:

> [=] Story:

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READ

NIL: Not in Lesson

Lesson 4

**January 17–23*

Unity Through Humility

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read for This Week's Study: *Phil 2:1–8, Jer. 17:9, Phil. 4:8, 1 Cor. 8:2, Rom. 8:3, Heb. 2:14–18.*

Memory Text: “Fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind” (Philippians 2:2, NKJV).

Unity is strength. But knowing what is true is not the same as doing it. We all fail sometimes, despite our best efforts at unity. But that’s not the same as deliberately undermining unity. No wonder, then, that as Paul continues writing to the Philippians, he wants them to be “of one accord, of one mind.”

Paul bases the necessity of unity on the teaching and example of Jesus. It’s a theme that we find throughout the New Testament and especially in the epistles. The origin of disunity in the universe stemmed from the pride and thirst for position and power of a single angel in heaven, a sentiment that spread quickly, even within a perfect environment (see *Isa. 14:12–14*). It then gained a foothold in Eden through a similar discontent with the rules God had put in place and the desire for rising to a higher sphere than that which God had designed (*Gen. 3:1–6*).

This week we’ll look at the biblical basis for unity in the church, focusing especially on the amazing condescension of Jesus, the lessons we can gain from beholding Him, and how we can grow to be more like Him.

**Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, January 24.*

SUNDAY

January 18

Disunity in Philippi

Read Philippians 2:1–3. What factors seem to have led to disunity within the church? What does Paul suggest as a remedy?

Philippians 2:1-3 1 Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,

2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

Php 2:3 KJV *Let nothing be done* through strife or **vainglory**; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

READ BOLD

It must have been a tremendous disappointment for Paul to see the church that he established and loved so much racked with rivalry and consumed with contention. He uses very strong language to describe the problems. **"Selfish ambition" translates a word (Greek, *eritheia*), used earlier in Philippians 1:16, to refer to Paul's self-interested rivals in Rome bent on promoting themselves rather than advancing the cause of Christ.**

selfish ambition: G2052 ([Mounce](#)) ἐριθεία eritheia

7x: the service of a party, party spirit; feud, faction, [2Co 12:20](#); **contentious disposition, selfish ambition**, [Gal 5:20](#); [Php 1:17](#); [Php 2:3](#); [Jas 3:14](#); by impl. untowardness, disobedience, [Rom 2:8](#); [Jas 3:16](#).

Kittel Vol. 2, p. 661

For many it probably had no more than the general sense of baseness, self-interest, ambition, contention etc. But in R. 2:8 contention or strife is rather too specialised, 13 and **we do best to see a reference to the despicable nature of those who do not strive after glory, honour and immortality**

Xplooalor. It is better than strife or contention in Phil. 2:3. 14 For this reason, it is best to understand ἐπίσια as "base self-seeking," or simply as "baseness", the nature of those who cannot lift their gaze to higher things.

For many it probably had no more than the general sense of baseness, self-interest, ambition, contention etc. But in R. 2:8 contention or strife is rather too specialised,,13 and **we do best to see a reference to the despicable nature of those who do not strive after glory, honour and immortality by perseverance in good works** (v. 7), but **who think only of immediate gain**. This meaning is equally applicable in 2 C. 12:20; Gl. 5:20; Phil. 1:17; Phil. 2:3; Jm. 3:14, 16; Ign. Phld., 8, (Note see book for greek words mentioned here)

It is better than strife or contention in Phil. 2:3. (The admonitions in of Phil. 2:3, 4 are against self-seeking) **For this reason, it is best to understand ἐριθεία eritheia as "base self-seeking," or simply as "baseness" the nature of those who cannot lift their gaze to higher things.**

Heb 13:5 *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

READ

"Selfish ambition" is among the works of the flesh (*Gal. 5:20, NKJV*) and, as James indicates, "where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there" (*James 3:16, NKJV*). The Greek word for "conceit" is used only here in the New Testament, but appears in extrabiblical literature in the sense of arrogance, hollow pride, and having an inflated sense of oneself. Paul uses a closely related word in admonishing the Galatians: "Let us not become conceited, **provoking one another, envying one another**" (*Gal. 5:26, NKJV*).

This a provoking that is acceptable

Heb 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

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Jas 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

Note the remedies Paul lists for these problems:

1. **Consolation in Christ.** Paul will proceed to use Christ's own example as a powerful motivation.
2. *Comfort of love.* Jesus reveals divine love and commands us to "love one another as I have loved you" (*John 15:12*).

John 13:35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Jesus said to the Jews: Scribes, pharisees, Sadducees

Jhn 5:42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

3. **Fellowship of the Spirit.** The presence of the Holy Spirit creates a close Christian relationship like the one that pervaded the early church (*Acts 2:42; compare 2 Cor. 13:14*).

4. **Affection (or compassion).** We see this divine quality frequently manifested in the life of Christ (see *Matt. 9:36, Matt. 20:34, Mark 1:41*) and described in the parables of the good Samaritan (*Luke 10:33*) and the prodigal son (*Luke 15:20*).
5. **Mercy.** This quality, exemplified by Jesus, is to be seen also in the lives of His followers (*Luke 6:36*).
6. **Being like-minded,** *having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* What a picture! It is difficult to imagine how Paul could emphasize the importance of unity more strongly. As Paul will point out, the mind we are to have “was also in Christ Jesus” (*Phil. 2:5*).

Titus 2:13-14 **13** looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,
14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.
15 Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

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Additional Notes