

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit,
but in humility
consider others better than yourselves

Philippians 2:1-18

¹ 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,

Philippians 2:1

[If there be therefore any consolation] The *ei*, if, does not express any doubt here, but on the contrary is to be considered as a strong affirmation; as there is consolation in Christ, as there is comfort of love, etc.

The word **parakleesis**, translated here "consolation", is in other places rendered exhortation, and is by several critics understood so here; as if he had said: If exhorting you in the name of Christ have any influence with you, etc. It is extremely difficult to give the force of these expressions; they contain a torrent of most affecting eloquence, the apostle pouring out his whole heart to a people whom with all his heart he loved, and who were worthy of the love even of an apostle.

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² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.

John 17:9-14

⁹ I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.

¹⁰ All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.

¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name — the name you gave me — so that they may be one as we are one.

¹² While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

¹³ "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

¹⁴ I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

NIV

Jesus of Nazareth

John 17:22-23

²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, **that they may be one as we are one:**

²³ I in them and you in me. **May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.**

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John 17:23

²³ I in them, and thou in me, **that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.**

KJV

Jesus of Nazareth

Philippians 2:3-18

³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Colossians 1:16-18

¹⁶ For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

¹⁸ And **he is the head of the body, the church;** he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

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Paul the Apostle

Let me just interrupt the words of the Holy Spirit spoken through Paul for a moment here. Please note that I say this as a Christian speaking to other Christians – those who have the ‘*Comfort*’ of our Lord Jesus Christ.

How quickly we forget to treat one another like brothers and sisters. We can hold resentments for such a long time. Years or a life time can go by without a word being said. We can go to the grave with this bitterness unresolved.

We cannot take our fortunes or the things we love, but bitterness, anger, un-forgiveness, and pride are treasures that not only drag along with us to our demise, they may shorten the very life we have.

Our love affair with sin is astounding to us as believers when we see things the way God wants us to see them. I speak for myself. What horrors our faults bring about in our lives and those around us.

This is the death that entered into the world at the fall. It's rigor mortis while we are living breathing creatures. How foolish can we be?

Let's read the words of James.

James 1:21-27

Doers – Not Hearers Only

²¹ Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;

²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

This is what happens to us from time to time. We forget the goodness of our Savior and we need to go back to the word to wash ourselves in the purity of the Bible. We hear good preaching, we read the words of life which are quickened by the Holy Spirit to our ears and burns in our hearts, but our sinful nature disrupts this flow of living water and we turn to the mud for our folly of sinful rages and faulted thoughts

Thank God that His ways are not our ways and His thoughts not our thoughts.

Jeremiah 30:22

²² "You shall be My people, And I will be your God."

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Jeremiah 32:27

²⁷ "Behold, I *am* the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?"

NKJV

Jeremiah 31:3

³ The LORD appeared to us in the past,^a saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."

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Jeremiah the Prophet

Back to the words of James

²⁶ If anyone among you^a thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless.

This is one thing James tells us elsewhere that no man does. No one controls his tongue and it is a restless evil whose working sets the very nature of our lives and those around us on fire by the very fire of hell itself.

James is speaking to the Jerusalem Church. He's not speaking to the world but to believers. So, our words, my words of discontent whether true or false, can do so much harm. Just try to imagine a raging fire and what it does to a forest. Think of the lush green vegetation and its life and then envision what's left over when the fire dies down. This is what happens

- ❖ to us,
- ❖ to ministries,
- ❖ to marriages,
- ❖ to relationships,
- ❖ to pastors,
- ❖ to siblings,
- ❖ parents and children.

They are set on fire and destroyed. This is not the purifying fire but one of destruction.

The Bible instructs us to have love.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14

¹² The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

¹³ For we were all baptized by^c one Spirit into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free — and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

¹⁴ Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.

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1 Corinthians 12:27

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

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1 Corinthians **12:31-13:8**

³¹ But eagerly desire^e the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.

13 If I speak in the tongues^a of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

³ If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames,^b but have not love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

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Paul the Apostle

Back to the words of James

²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

NKJV *The Apostle James - the Greater, the half brother of Jesus*

Back to Philippians

Philippians 2:5-7

⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature^a God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature^b of a servant, being made in human likeness.

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Philippians 2:6-7

⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

⁷ **but made Himself of no reputation**, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men.

NKJV

Paul the Apostle

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!

Philippians 2:8

[And being found in fashion as a man] *Kai schemati heuretheis hoos anthroopos.*

This clause should be joined to the preceding, and thus translated: Being made in the likeness of man, and was found in fashion as a man.

[He humbled himself] Laid himself as low as possible:

1. In emptying himself-laying aside the effulgence of his glory.
2. In being incarnate-taking upon him the human form.
3. In becoming a servant-assuming the lowest innocent character, that of being the servant of all.
4. In condescending to die, to which he was not naturally liable, as having never sinned, and therefore had a right in his human nature to immortality, without passing under the empire of death.
5. In condescending, not only to death, but to the lowest and most ignominious kind of death, the death of the cross; the punishment of the meanest of slaves and worst of felons.

What must sin have been in the sight of God, when it required such abasement in Jesus Christ to make an atonement for it, and undo its influence and malignity!

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Philippians 2:5-7

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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Colossians 1:13 – 15; 19,20

¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,

¹⁴ in whom we have redemption,^e the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,

²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

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Paul the Apostle

¹² Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,

¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

¹⁴ Do everything without complaining or arguing,

¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe

¹⁶ as you hold out^c the word of life – in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

¹⁷ But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you.

¹⁸ So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

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Paul the Apostle

Colossians 1:9-12

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

¹⁰ And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully

¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^d to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

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Paul the Apostle