



“Family Feud”

Philippians 4:1-3

The Joy of Unity: The Book of Philippians

Philippians 4:1-3 – “Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved. ²I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. ³Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.”

6 Steps for Resolving Church Conflict

1. Recognize the danger of division.

Verse 1: “stand firm in the Lord...”

If we don’t stand together, we won’t be able to stand at all (Mk 3:25). It’s much easier to tear something down than to build it up.

2. Remember who we are in Christ.

Verse 1: “stand firm in the Lord...”

- A. We are beloved.
- B. We are brethren.
- C. We are someone’s joy and crown.
 - Several crowns are mentioned in the New Testament (Rev 2:10; 2Tim 4:8; 1Thes 2:19; 1Pet 5:4)
 - Athletic games in ancient Greece – winner received a crown as a trophy. It was a symbol of victory.

3. Address the conflict as soon as possible.

Verse 2: “I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord.”

Paul was very direct and addressed conflict head-on.

Paul was fair and even-handed. No hint of favoritism or blame.

What was the cause of their conflict? We don’t know!

- This is the only place these women are mentioned in Scripture.
- Euodia means “prosperous journey.” Syntyche means “pleasant acquaintance.” They weren’t living up to their names.

4. Take the initiative to reconcile.

Matthew 18:15 "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother."

Matthew 5:23-24 "If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."

5. Get help from a mediator.

Verse 3: "Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women..."

Who is the true companion?

- Perhaps a pastor or elder in the Philippian church – someone they would have easily recognized.
- Probably Epaphroditus. He was a trusted leader who hand-delivered the letter himself.

A mediator is a person who helps opposing parties come to an agreement.

Matthew 18:16-17 "But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector."

6. Try to find common ground.

- A. We share a common cause – proclaiming the gospel (v. 3)
- B. We share a common position – fellow workers (v. 3)
- C. We share a common future – our names are written in the book of life (v. 3)

Romans 12:18 – "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever been personally involved in a family feud? What happened, and how did the situation turn out?
2. Why do you think all believers should take the initiative to seek reconciliation, regardless of whether they offended someone else, or someone offended them? (Matthew 18:15 & 5:23)
3. Why is the role of a mediator so important?
4. When you're in the middle of a conflict, what could you do to try to find common ground?
5. What stood out to you or helped you the most in the message this week?