

# Living in Unity

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 11 November 2018

Preacher: Lewis MacAulay

[ 0 : 0 0 ] let's all turn back to the passage of philippians chapter 2 and we're going to stay in verse is 1 to 11 all right i'm not sure about yourself but i am a little bit of a geek i love watching sci-fi things i love watching discovery channel if i was left up to me i could probably watch it all day i'll be totally honest but there's one interesting story i was reading i had a little bit of a fascination with space men going to the moon neil armstrong buzz aldrin all these guys i was looking at the story of a satellite that was launched in 1999 and it was launched towards the planet mars so this satellite was going there to measure the weather on the atmosphere of the planet just on the edge of the atmosphere now i know what you're thinking why on earth would we do that we can't even get our own weather right but they sent this all the way hurtled across space for something like three or four years and disaster struck the satellite ended up too close to this planet and it crashed that was 125 million dollar car crash right that was quite an expensive car crash and they had an investigation to figure out exactly what went wrong and this was it at the beginning of the whole project they had two teams one from europe and one from the united states of america and this team could not agree on what measurements to use for their instruments will they use miles will they use kilometers will we use yards feet centimeters meters meters so they decided to essentially do their own thing and what they'll do when they come to putting this together we will we'll adjust it we will convert it and they had figured out they had measured the distance between here and mars wrong by using by using miles instead of kilometers so this thing hurtles right into the planet and crash this is the problem with these two groups though the problem was they were not of one mind they did not use one measurement neither group would settle for the other suggestion they were not unified they were not together on the planet they didn't sing from the same hymn sheet each essentially thought they knew better and what was the result absolute destruction and expectancy destruction like that but we see here in this book of philippians that paul is addressing a group of christians here that are obviously needing the reminder to be unified they are not together they are not on board together for this gospel mission they have been looking to their own interests to their own preferences to their own pride they have been selfish and because of this behavior there was a lack of unity and paul here clearly gives an encouragement and a clear instruction to this church here in philippi and also helpfully to remind us here today of the importance of unity so we're going to break this up into three points there's any note takers here we're going to look at first a call to unity secondly the problem and third the solution for those who are christians here it's very clear from the scriptures that god requires us to live a certain way when we have turned from our sin from our sin and trusted in the lord we are expected to live differently in light of the gospel we are to live literally opposite to the world

we are to be a witness to the world of what christ has done we are to live like christ we are to be obey his scriptures his law and his commands so as paul is coming to these guys in philippi here he's really wanting them to live godly lives and here we're going to see he's going to come to encourage them to live according to christ's teaching and he wants them to be obedient and in doing so calling them to a life of unity for any of us that maybe watch any sports movies you know it comes to half time and there's three goals down and the manager gives this rousing speech it's more an american thing you see it in american football movies more often the manager wants the best for them he's trained them for years he's watched them go through loads of games and they've come to this final half time he wants to see his plans put into purpose he is cheering them on and this is what paul is basically doing here in this letter to this church in philippine philippines he's a bit like this manager he's cheering them on he's encouraging them he actually tells them to complete his joy that's quite a strange statement what he's basically saying is he has taught them to be of the same mind to have the same love to go towards the same goals and he wants to see this in

completion like this football manager with his tactics and his strategy he wants to see this being put into plan paul wants them to be obedient to god he wants them to work together he is commanding them to be unified to be of one mind to be in full accord but how should this unity what should this unity look like what does this unity look like for us as a church here in livingston what does it look like over in nidre what does it look like in carlisle pennsylvania what does it look like in liberia how do we seek to be of the same mind of the same love how does it practically look and look at two things here first of all we must be reading and studying god's word my wife and i recently got married about seven months ago so we had the joy of receiving wedding presents and in fact we got this really nice mixer it makes like mixes for cakes and things like that susanna got really excited about it i couldn't quite be the same but and when we got it being the classic man i was took it out the box i can put it together i can do this i didn't feel like i needed the instructions most of the men in here can probably testify to do the exact same thing here so i tried to put it together no luck at all couldn't put the bowl on the stand couldn't get the mixer blades on couldn't even find the latch to lift the mixer i was useless but susanna of course my wife helpfully pointed out the instructions to me and thankfully we got it up and running and this is the thing god in his grace has given us instructions as christians he has given us his word he's given us the bible and we must prioritize this individually in our own devotional life and not just that as a whole church we must be reading our bibles we must be studying the scriptures these give us the instruction how we live our lives as christians it teaches us what we should believe about god it teaches us what we are to believe and know about ourselves it tells us what man is like in his sinfulness and fallenness it tells us who our savior is it tells us of our hope in christ our savior it teaches us about the world around us the bible is very clear if we are to be of one mind our mind must be filled with god's word if our mind is filled with god's word then we will be of one mind we will have the same love we'll have the same love for jesus we'll have the same joy in spreading the gospel together we will be unified we'll work together as a team we will seek the same goals we will push each other on and that is the second thing that's really important is we need to gather together those that work maybe here as a church or those that attend here or are members here we need to sit down and communicate we don't just need to study the scriptures we need to understand how we are to serve each other how we are to love one another how we are to support one another if we are to be the same love we must communicate as a congregation as a church we must be in relationship with one another how can we be in one mind with someone if we don't know them we must spend time with one another encouraging and pushing on each other in the lord called god tells us to do so hebrews 10 24 says this let us consider how to stir up one another and to love and good works imagine if we just didn't communicate there'd be no progress there'd be no growth together nothing would get done if no one did anything we wouldn't have lights here we wouldn't have chairs we wouldn't have heating and that is why as members we make a promise to serve and to gather as a church and it is important we gather as a covenant church to live and obey god together because you know what it is through jesus's church is through god's church here in nidri in carlisle is how he shows his glory it is how he spreads his message it is how he proclaims his name but this is the problem we are sinful we are fallen and this is the second point there is a problem and this is that we are not of one mind we're all different aren't we we're all very different we're all different shapes and sizes some of us speak differently we have different interests some are younger some are older some like bacon rolls some like egg rolls some support rangers some support selling some support hearts some support heads some are middle class some are not even working class some live in a one bed flat some have a four bed house some of us are scottish some of us are english some of us are maybe on benefits some of us are maybe earning loads of money some of us here might have a master's degree and some of us here might not have even finished high school we come from different walks of life we have different views on certain topics and this creates an issue how on earth are we meant to all get along look how different we are there's already division in our society go to bbc politics watch a bbc politics channel it's very easy to see there's already division and we have this natural inkling to lead towards our preferences and this even shows in our actions towards each other we quite often as these guys in philippi did think less of each other we look down on each other we don't want to be unified and this even shows in the church this is the thing we sometimes come to a point where we don't respect each other where we are prideful where we want our own way even in church we can't decide what color we want the walls what color we want the carpets what songs we should sing what preacher we prefer what version of the bible we should use what we eat for church lunch what other people wear

we sometimes prefer the sound of our own voice than others don't we sometimes some of us maybe have an issue with how we see other parents parenting some of us don't like to be told what to do we can't even be united on the simplest things we don't want to listen to others sometimes we can't be bothered helping fellow church members some of us can't even be bothered praying for our brothers and sisters sometimes we try and find an issue with one another rather than seeking to encourage some of us don't want to serve in this church see we struggle this even between these four walls the bottom line is this is that our pride leads to disunity in the body it leads to chaos it leads to selfishness and it leads to destruction this is a reminder for all churches across the world that our selfishness that our pride that this disunity will not just destroy us but will destroy the witness of god's church and this is the thing we need to change our attitudes don't we paul makes it clear here at verse three and paul is going to give us here the solution and here's the issue in verse three and four let's read verse three and four again do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit but in humility can others more significant than yourselves let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others the solution rather than ourselves we need to prioritize others we need to help others consider others we are called to live a life of humility in the christian life we are called to die to ourselves every day there should be no such thing as a selfish christian it's not in the bible and if you find one please tell me afterwards we're called to serve our brothers and sisters we are to think of their gain and benefit we are to support them and disciple them we are to help the weaker brother or sister we are to honor and respect the mature older believer we should be encouraging and challenging one another we should be listening to one another even those who are totally different to us now paul isn't saying here don't have any interest or don't look after yourself he isn't saying sell your four bed and live in a shed with your family he isn't saying starve so others may eat he's saying don't be selfish he is saying let us share in the benefits that christ has given us he says not look only to your own interest but also the interest of others but what does this look in certain areas of our lives what does this look like we are to think of others well-being we're to think of their walk with christ we're even meant to consider those outside of christ we are meant to consider non-christians we're meant to consider them so that we may preach the gospel to them we are to consider our elderly members that need support practically and spiritually so that they may be able to be included in our family we're to consider our children who were called to disciple in our sunday schools we're to consider the people who might be single in this church that struggle with loneliness that they may know the intimacy and companionship in our fellowship we are to consider the families that need help in supporting their children we are to consider our brothers and sisters who have nothing who are poor we are to consider the person that annoys us not just the person we like we are to consider the drug addict on prince's street to consider him and show him of his need for christ we are to consider the millionaire businessman that has maybe sacrificed his family at the altar of success so it's obvious in order to be a unity we must count others more significant than ourselves we are meant to consider them but there's a problem we fail at this every single day you probably failed it today before you had your breakfast in fact even maybe during this sermon we recognize our attitudes towards others and maybe see where our own heart lies the reality is we do this don't we we don't consider others we fail but there is hope for us and paul looks to remind the church of philippi here of the example of christ let's read from verse 5 to a little have this mind among yourselves which is yours in christ jesus who though he was in the form of god did not count equality with god a thing to be grasped but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death even death on a cross excuse me therefore god has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name so that at the name of jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that jesus christ is lord to the glory of god the father paul tells his church of philippi to keep these things in mind remember what christ has done look to him as an example we have to remember that christ jesus is god he is eternal infinite perfect holy he was in the presence of god the father and spirit the eternity past in perfect union and he chose to become a servant he chose to be born in the likeness of men he chose to be born to a teenage girl in a cold stable in a town called bestlay him not in a shed full of cow pat and dirt and i don't think we realize how crazy this is imagine the queen was sitting in buckingham palace right now sitting at a nice table having a nice cup of tea and some scones maybe a cucumber sandwich and she turns around to fill up and goes you know what i'm gonna leave this these guys down in the sewers they really need me the queen said that you would

think that was nuts but this is the thing jesus left this

[ 20 : 21 ] to come to a sinful messy rotten earth he emptied himself he humbled himself and the thing is this humility this example of christ didn't just end there he became a man and not a rich well-off king but he became low he had a humble upbringing he more than likely worked as a carpenter or a joiner he didn't have massive riches he didn't have a load of benefits he didn't have some high status he took the humble form of a servant not a master this is the thing jesus is the king of the universe he was he would be entitled to live how he pleased he owns everything he created it he sustains it all but do you know what he did he saw equality with god not something to be grasped if anyone had the right to though it was him but he didn't and what was the result of this so the life behind the glories of heaven was born in the likeness of men and been found in human form but that didn't stop there he came and he died on a cross he became sin for us he took the punishment that was due for us and took it upon himself and this is our hope as christians this evening where we failed in counting others significant christ did it perfectly in considering our sin and shortcoming and deciding to save us where we were disobedient he was perfectly obedient where we lived a selfish life he lived the perfect life all the time thinking of others more significant than himself remember on the cross what did he say he said father forgive them right the guys that nails nails into his hands and in his feet and put them on a cross he said forgive them for they do not know what they do he died the perfect death so that we would not have to die christ lived a god glorifying life and where paul's encouraging these believers in philippi is by pointing them to christ he said look at this example look at what he did may that help you may that motivate you to be of the same mind and of the same love and he seeks for us to do the same look at what christ has done let it motivate us to die to self to live for christ to live humbly in this world not be prideful selfish or conceited but having the same mind as christ and maybe there are those here today who do not know jesus who do not submit to his lordship the right is you cannot do this yourself you cannot live an acceptable life you will be eternally punished for your disobedience against god and there's only one who can save us from this punishment and it is christ so seek him and trust him outside of christ we are doomed but in christ we are saved but and because of his obedience look at verse 9 and 10 jesus is exalted his name is praised all these will bow before him in heaven and on earth and below earth every tongue will confess that jesus is lord and it will be all to the glory of god and christ's reward for his obedience is eternal glory and the great joy for us as believers is that we get to share in this

there is a great reward a benefit for the christian and that is eternal life where we will get to bow down before him in heaven we will praise his name with the angels we will get to share in the glory of god and we get to dwell with him and enjoy him forever so brothers and sisters let us strive for unity let us think of others interests and priorities let us share the mind of christ and look to him as the example who humbled himself so much that he died the death of the lowest criminal but through this saved our souls from death and in doing so has brought us life let us pray i pray god and heavenly father we thank you for this night that we get to sit under your word lord god we thank you for this encouragement of christ we thank you for the lord jesus christ who came and was the perfect example lord who came to earth and lived perfectly and died perfectly so that we may be with him at the end of this life lord we thank you for the reminder of what it is to be of the same mind help us as a church as a community as families as married couples as individuals seek to be of one mind and of full accord that we may seek to glorify and honor christ together that we may seek to glorify and honor god that he may be given all the glory and lord may this shine out from beyond these four walls lord god may it shine into these communities that are around us wherever we are wherever we are represented here today lord god help us to continue to plow on help us to live a life of humility as christ our savior and king has us we ask in jesus name amen you