

- ◇ A person of strong, sincere concern (verse 20)
- ◇ A man of commitment to Christ (verse 21)

Epaphroditus sacrificed with the right attitude.

- ◇ Results in new relationships (verse 25).
- ◇ Results in new responsibilities (verses 26-28).
- ◇ Results in wonderful blessings (verses 29-30).

The Personal Application

Some think this is impossible. They say, "You just do not know what s/he is like. There is just NO WAY that I can do what you are asking. If s/he is in that group then I'm OUT! I'm not the only one who feels toward him/her like this...so-and-so and so-and-so and many others refuse to be around him/her."

A decision NOT to accept people that you do not like places you in dramatic contrast with Christ, Timothy and Epaphroditus!

Concluding Thoughts...

The Christian is one who is able to find joy in the presence of irritating people because he anxiously serves not wanting to be served (Philippians 2:3). A practical reality...Your problem person presents you with a choice on how you will act.

You can choose to act so that division and disrespect for his/her personal value is evidenced.

Or you can choose to act with the same attitude that Christ demonstrated: "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...just as the Lord...so also should you" (Colossians 3:12-13).

When you think of the most problematic person that plagues your life, what choice will you make—one choice banishes joy and the other choice provides the environment in which abundant joy will flourish.



NEXT LESSON:
Philippians 3 reveals how Christians have a joyous victory over **WORLDLY THINGS!**

Scan for lesson series



LESSON HANDOUT

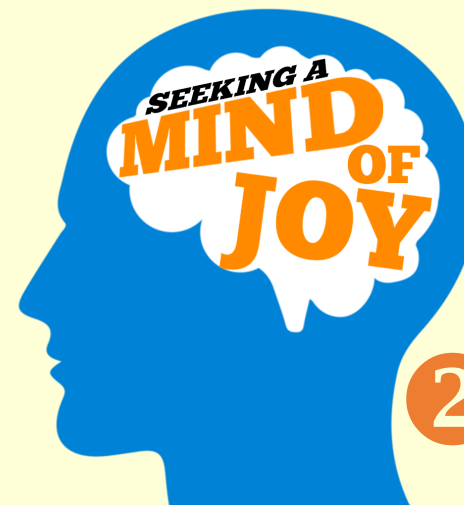
Those people who do not act civil rob us of joy. The Psalmist wrote of such: Psalm 28:3; 43:2; 109:3.

We become aggravated because we are not getting our way or those people are not doing things the way we suggest. And, sadly it is often found that most conflicts ignite over some absurdity.

October 1, 2020. *NEWSWEEK* "Arkansas Man Shoots Woman Dead Over Botched Fast-Food Order." Police Say a man who shot a woman dead and injured his own brother after they got his fast-food order wrong has been handed a 130-year prison sentence. Crockett looked at the food the duo had just brought back and said: "You know I don't like mayonnaise on my hamburger."

Philippians 2 is an amazing narrative teaching us how to deal with the ornery, irritating, obnoxious people that plague our lives. Four points are involved in this strategy to safeguard joy.

The First: Philippians 2:1-4, the COMMAND—Unity
Mankind is created as a social being—he NEEDS companionship; he NEEDS other people. God expects His People to be sociable; to interact with one another; to know and understand each other. We share "fellowship" which involves a melding of



THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

with *John Kachelman Jr.*

2 Joyous Victory when facing Irritating People
(Philippians 2)

hopes, ideals and actions moving us toward our mission's objective. This unity accepts each regardless of his flaws (1 Cor 12:12-26, "the members have the same care for one another").

This unity is in the Church because four basic truths are accepted by every member:

- ◇ "Encouragement in Christ"
- ◇ "Consolation of love"
- ◇ "Fellowship of the Spirit"
- ◇ "Affection and compassion"

This is God's command. The Christian cannot function within his own "cell" but must be connected with others. I am obligated to be a functioning member of this congregation. The how to establish this functionality is found by following these steps (verse 2):

- ◇ "Same mind" (1 Cor 1:10; John 17:17, 20, 21)
- ◇ "Same love"
- ◇ "One accord," "united in spirit"
- ◇ "One mind," "intent on one purpose"

The "how" of unity requires diligent effort and great patience with one another. The pressing issue is NOT how "impossible" that brother or sister is but HOW ARE YOU following God's commands to make it a reality?

The emphasis (verses 3-4) focuses upon negatives and positives in relationships. Be thoughtful and considerate in their attitudes toward others (Galatians 6:10). The basic plea is to be unselfish and humble in all relationships!

Watch how you carelessly talk about a fellow Christian! Many times, one speaks bitter and biting words that plant suspicion and suggestive innuendoes so another is viewed with a bad opinion. This is contrary to what God commands and will remove joy in life!

The Second: Philippians 2:5-11, the KEY—
imitating Jesus Christ

Verse 5 provides the key concept—"Mind" is literally "attitude." "Have the exact attitudes of Christ and you will find joy in your unity and harmony!" This passage bluntly speaks to all who think of themselves as "too good" to be servants to others; to be impatient with the irritating behavior

of others.

What traits formed this attitude of Christ which all Christians should possess?

- ◇ Unselfish (verse 6)
- ◇ Humility (verse 7a)
- ◇ Service (v. 7a)
- ◇ Sacrificial Attitude (v. 7)
- ◇ Perfect Obedience (v. 8)
- ◇ Glorifies (v.11)

Guarding against your joy being stolen by irritating people is this fact: "You have this attitude that Christ demonstrated!"

The Third: Philippians 2:12-18, the CONCEPT—
"selfless sacrifice"

Safeguarding your personal joy is possible ONLY by *your personal choice*. YOU must "work out your salvation with fear and trembling" (verse 12). When you are dealing with ornery and irritating people, the burden is upon YOU to deal with the situation.

- ◇ Do not think THEY have to change to suit your preferences.
- ◇ Do not think THEY are totally wrong.
- ◇ Do not think THEY are so much inferior than you are.
- ◇ Interaction with the irritating and obnoxious involves "work."

You must allow God to "work in you" and change your attitude, actions and comments about the brethren you do not like (verse 13).

You must "prove" your love, consideration and compassion toward those who "get under your skin" (verses 14-16). The way you behave reveals your commitment to God!

You must "share the joy" with others in accepting everyone into the congregation (verses 17-18).

The Fourth: Philippians 2:19-30, the EXAMPLES—
Timothy & Epaphroditus

Timothy found joy by being...

- ◇ A person of commendation (verse 19)
- ◇ A man of positive nature (verse 19)

