

BCC – Thrive – Living in Agreement

Philippians 2:1-4 Slide 2 NASB

Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, ² make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. ³ Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Biblical ethics are transformational

Living the way the Bible tells us we should live are transformational

Living with Biblical values are an indication of a thriving believer.

Key Verses.

1. regard one another as more important than yourselves
2. do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Pauls letter to the Philippians is very personal.

In Phil he lays down a pattern of his life, and says be like me.

In these four verses alone he uses some key words:

- a. Be of the same mind
- b. Maintain the same love
- c. United in spirit
- d. Intent on one purpose

He is trying to create a lifestyle.

How do we, as a group of believers, move towards these 4 values?

Paul begins to tell us, '**by doing nothing through selfishness and empty conceit**'.

Ultimately its about being humble. God cannot make you humble? Only you can. And God is attracted to humility.

Humility is not a subject we are attracted to.

If you saw a conference advertised, Supersonic revival ministries presents, with anointed speakers from all over the world, a dynamic conference on 'How to be humble'. It would not sell many tickets.

Humility is the key component to living in agreement with one another.

Our perspective of pride is that we see it in the rich and famous.

But pride is in every human heart.

God resists the proud

Jerome – Think, brother, what a sin it must be which has God for its opponent

John Cassian - How great is the evil of pride, that it rightly has no angel, nor other virtues opposed to it, but God Himself as its adversary!

We need to learn about living in the awareness of other people.

As you get involved in other people, you become less consumed with yourself. (And I don't mean busybodies)

A prideful person is obsessed with themselves. His life revolves around his opinions, desires, needs. It is all about him or her and their immediate family. There's no room for anyone else.

I have strong opinions – ask my family.

I noticed a trait in my several years ago that I did not like. In a conversation I would always have something I wanted to say. It usually involved my opinion, my experiences, my advice.

Now if they asked for it then fine, but I frequently found myself thinking: Ok if you would only just stop talking. And let me tell you all I have to say. Just shut up so I can talk and you must listen to me. I've got all the answers.

We have a distant acquaintance. If you have done anything, or been anywhere – they have always done that or been to that place better than you. If you have experienced something they have experienced it to a fuller sense.

If you've been ill – they've been iller

If you've failed – they've failed better

Back to me – I noticed this trait in conversation that I wanted to hear my voice more than I wanted to hear others voices.

So I began to train myself to do this:

1. Listen more (2 ears – one mouth)
2. Don't always think I have to say something at all.
3. Don't be searching to trump other people's experiences – that happened to you – guess what happened to me. You have never walked in another's shoes.
4. Appreciate other people's experiences.
(I am very much a student in this still)

There are people who are tank fillers when you meet them, rather than phlebotomists. Phlebotomists are people who take your blood.

If you donate blood – you don't leap out of the chair and run down the road afterwards.

They tell you to rest, give you a cup of tea and a biscuit. Once you are OK off you go.

Sometimes you meet people like that don't you? After a conversation, you need to lie down in a dark room with cup of tea and a biscuit to recover. A piece of cake sometimes.

Some people are the opposite. When you spend time with them they fill your tank up. Or should I say in these ecological times – they recharge your battery.

I have a friend who does that (means life) When you meet him you feel like a million dollars. He runs an amazing ministry and is super busy – yet you are always the focus of his attention.

- a. Preachers: Its not all about you and your opinions. No one is interested. It does not bring life, but the word of God does.
- b. Leaders, think how you lead. Is your leadership about encouragement and building others up?
- c. Those who have prophetic gifts, are they focussing on God and building others?

Johns first letter sets out what it is to be a follower of Jesus. It is the test of true believers.

1 John 3:16-18

We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. ¹⁷ But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

We need to increase our awareness of, concern for and devotion to God and others.

The humble mind thinks not of its claims on others, but of its duties to them. Alexander MacClaren

We must live with a concern for others.

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³ For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Galatians 6:2-3

What exactly is the law of Christ, and how is it fulfilled by carrying each other's burdens?

The law of Christ is what Christ stated were the greatest commandments in

Mark 12:29–31, ²⁹ Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. ³¹ And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

This is a direct quotation from Deuteronomy 6. Which is itself the central prayer in the Jewish prayer book. The Shema:

Sh'ma Yisra'eil Adonai Eloheinu Adonai echad.

Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

Romans 12:10-16 reinforces how we should treat each other.

Matthew 20:38 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Question: Why am I here? Why are you here?

Think of Paul's examples?

Think of what he went through to serve the people he cared for?

When he was prophetically warned that he would be bound and imprisoned by the prophet Agabus, (Acts 21) he said well I'm going to do it anyway.

His life revolved around the service of others. He gave up comfort (not the fabric softener), safety, pleasure, prosperity, position – for the Gospel call and the service of others.

There is a joy that comes from serving others that you may be missing out on.

There is a lot to be said about having the right focus.

And that focus is not you.

Living the way, the Bible tells us we should live are transformational

Living with Biblical values are an indication of a thriving believer.