

**Be of the Same Mind (Philippians 2:1-11)**  
Zionsville Fellowship | Derek Joseph | June 21, 2026

Good morning!  
my name is Derek Joseph; I'm a member here at ZF  
And also, happy father's day to all the father's here!

Let me ask you a question.  
Where have you experienced disunity?  
Between friends? At work?  
In your family? in church?  
We all have, and it's hurt us.

And then there's our country.  
In 2024, Gallup did a survey  
they found that 80% of Americans feel divided on key values.

But also we see things like the World Cup.  
And how that brought some unity between people  
But we know that will end when its over.

So we may be left asking  
Is unity even possible?  
Is real, lasting, unity possible?

God says yes.  
here's the key phrase from our text today,  
Phil 2:2

*be of the same mind (x2)*

Joyful unity is possible.  
Phil 2:1-11 gives us four steps to be of the same mind.  
It's on p. 980 of the bibles under the seats.  
So grab one if it helps to follow along!

Let me pray and we'll get started.  
Holy Father,  
We praise you as the one real God!  
Thank you that Christ intercedes for us right now  
Holy Spirit, cause us to be of the same mind - Amen.

God says, *be of the same mind*  
And he gives us four steps to do it.  
That's what we'll look at in the rest of our time - those 4 steps

**Here's the first.**  
Step 1 - Know it's possible. (x2)  
Don't think God can't or won't create unity  
It's possible to be of the same mind.

God lists things we need for unity.  
And they're things he gives!  
Listen - v. 1

*So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy.*

God gives us what we need to be of the same mind

He gives us encouragement in Christ.

Has the Messiah, the King, the Savior, given you any courage at all?

Any courage to tell others about Jesus?

Any courage to abandon sin?

That's what encouragement means in the Bible

it means to give courage.

Has God given you any?

Not perfect courage. Not total fearlessness.

Not complete self-sacrifice. But - any?

That's from God!

So unity is possible

God gives us something else to give us the same mind.

comfort from love.

Do you feel at all like God loves you?

Do you have some comfort from the fact that he put his Son to death for you?

Do you have any solace because God's promised you heaven?

We don't need to be spontaneously singing all day every day.

Unity doesn't require we never feel anxious or doubtful

But - do you sometimes have some comfort knowing God loves you?

It's from God!

So we can be of the same mind.

God gives us another gift that creates unity.

participation in the Spirit.

That doesn't mean you feel spiritual.

The Spirit wrote a book!

Do you like it?

The Spirit empowers witness.

Do you try to tell others about Christ at all?

The Spirit empowers prayer.

Do you sometimes ask God to glorify himself?

Not always - but sometimes?

Then you participate in the Spirit.

It's from God. Its for being of the same mind.

God also gives us affection and sympathy.

When we gather, do you like other people who know Jesus?

When you hear that another Christian is hurting do you hurt to?

Not perfectly - but at all?

Then listen - God himself gave that to you.

And it's so we can *be of the same mind*.

Knowing that being of the same mind is possible is  
step 1 to being of the same mind.

And it's possible it's from God  
he gives these gifts to everyone who trusts Jesus.  
And yes, they are not perfect in us yet.  
But they are not absent either.

So it is really possible to be of the same mind.  
That's step 1  
Know it's possible

You may have noticed this is only possible for Christians.  
For people who know Jesus.

But someone might say unity is possible for unbelievers.  
True. But eternal, joyful, unity isn't.

Ahab and Jezebel were united.  
They felt total oneness in executing God's prophets.  
And making people worship Baal.

A couple today could have unity in pursuing the American dream.  
Happy, comfortable home  
Nice vacations. Successful kids.

The builders at Babel had unity.  
They didn't want to scatter abroad.  
That would've been uncomfortable and hard.  
They were unified in building a tower so they could all stay there.

Pro Choice groups have unity.  
They're unified in ensuring unborn people can be murdered.

But listen - only people who know Jesus Christ as Lord -  
only we can be unified in telling everyone this:  
Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners

even murderers like St. Paul or King David -  
only we can tell any sinner that there is a God who became man.  
Who took the punishment we deserve.  
Who rose and lives.  
And who accepts everyone who calls on him as Lord.

Only we can be unified telling good news -  
the unjust can be completely acquitted.  
Forever loved. Totally secure.  
If they just come to Jesus.

So temporary unity does exist.  
And evil unity exists.  
But eternal, joyful unity is only in Christ.

And it's possible because God creates

*encouragement in Christ, comfort from love, participation in the Spirit, affection...sympathy*

Before we move to step 2, let's think for a minute.

praise God for giving us those gifts Individually.

But also - look around!

God has given those gifts to every other Christian too! Praise God!

That's Step 1 to be of the same mind:

know it's possible.

### **Here's step 2**

Get the goal right.

To be of the same mind, we have to get the goal right.

Unity comes from having the same mission.

Here's why this is important.

You can have institutional unity without real unity.

Some people today are leaving the gospel -

abandoning salvation by grace alone, by Christ alone, by faith alone.

Some are becoming Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox.

Part of the draw of those groups is institutional unity.

Unity of organization

But don't for a second think people in those religions are united in mission, love or even beliefs

And if you need to talk about those things later, please come talk to me

there's nothing more important than getting the gospel of salvation right

And God never commands organizational unity.

He tells us to do something way more important

*be of the same mind*

To do that, we need to get the goal right.

Listen to v. 2 -

*complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.*

*Be of the same mind.*

That raises a question.

What is that same mind?

It means having the same goal.

That goal is in Phil 1:27

*standing firm in one spirit with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.*

That's the unity.

That's the one mind.

Get the goal right.

And here's the goal:

We exist to proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light!

Churches are on this planet to make disciples of all the nations.  
Every member of Christ is here to advance the gospel.  
To every city. Every tribe. Every tongue. Every people.

That's the one mind. The one goal.  
That's why ZF is here.  
That's why every gospel believing church is here.

That's why you - believer in Jesus - are here.  
To strive side by side for the faith of the gospel.  
To get the message - forgiveness in Christ - to a world that needs him.  
To proclaim to every place on this planet that Jesus the Savior is Lord of everything.

*Be of the same mind.*  
Get the goal right.

Here's what happens if we get the goal wrong.  
We could try to be unified in using the church for emotional health.  
Or as a social outlet.  
Or as a tool to transform governments.  
Or as spiritual entertainment.

Unity around that kind of thing might feel good for a while.  
But it won't last & it won't end happily.  
But if we get the goal right, we will *be of one mind*

That's part of the reason we gather every Lord's day  
We re-focus.  
Remember what's true.  
Remember the goal.

I know I need reminders about what our goal is.  
I'm guessing you do too

And we can also refocus in our small groups.  
In family prayer.  
In your own private prayer times.

God says - *Be of the same mind.*  
Step 2 toward doing that is this:  
Get the goal right.

**Now heres step 3.**  
**We need to watch out for barriers.**  
**Barriers to being of the same mind exist.**  
**We need to watch out.**

Now it would be really easy to think of other people as barriers.

And sometimes they are!  
But you can only control you, and I can only control me.

And also remember: unity is possible-  
God gives power to every Christian to be of the same mind.  
So God changes me and you,  
he changes everyone who trusts Jesus.

But barriers do exist.  
And you need to watch out for your own.  
that's step 3 toward unity.

There are four barriers God says to watch out for.  
Listen for them - vv. 3-4

*Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

1st. barrier. Selfish ambition.  
That's wanting a position. A title.  
Teacher, manager,  
elder, director  
deacon, supervisor.  
Whatever. Selfish Ambition.

2nd. barrier to unity. Conceit.  
That's wanting people to honor you.  
Speak good about you.  
to you or to other people.  
To be applauded. Recognized.  
Conceit

3rd. barrier to being of one mind.  
not considering others more significant than you.  
feeling like you're more important than other people.

Not thinking it'd be a big deal if some other person wasn't in church anymore  
We should be thinking the opposite.  
If any member of Christ's body is removed - it would hurt us all.  
To be of the same mind, we can't act like others aren't more important than us.

4th barrier.  
looking to our own interests above others.  
Interests just means benefit.

It's means not thinking about other people.  
Or thinking about others because of how they might think about you.  
Which is really just thinking about yourself.

There's four barriers to unity.  
We need to watch out for those.  
And then we can actually be of the same mind.

Here's what I think of when I think of this kind of unity.  
I think of a military unit under attack.  
in a tunnel. They've been ambushed.  
They're ducking behind a corner as gunfire echoes around them.  
bullets fly past their heads.

There's an explosion.  
Rubble blocks their exit.  
some of it's falling on them.

One of them is panicking -  
Hopeless, thinking he's going to die.

Another pulls out a picture of his young wife and child  
he dreads he's never going to see them again.

Another has taken a bullet and it's bleeding bad.  
Another had rubble crush his leg, and he can't walk

But then, the man with the picture forgets himself  
he puts pressure on his fellow soldier's gunshot wound

Another soldier grabs the man who's sobbing and helps him up.  
Tells him we're all here, we've got this, we're going to make it out.

The captain isn't thinking about his high position.  
He's pulling the rubble off the man with the broken leg  
He picks him up to carry him out.

There's no selfish ambition or conceit there.  
No one's thinking about being important.  
Or thinking about self

They're thinking - we've got a mission.  
A goal.  
The unit is a unity. The barriers are gone.

That's how we're supposed to be.  
*Be of the same mind.*  
Watch out for barriers.

So think for a minute: who's around you?  
Is anyone in need of courage?  
is anyone in in pain that needs to be patched up?  
Is anyone isolated who needs to be connected?  
Who around needs help so we can go after God's goal together?

Our flesh puts barriers in our hearts that keep us from helping.  
We need to watch out.  
But when we do watch out, we can be of the same mind  
we can strive side by side for the faith of the gospel.

That's step 3.

Watch out for barriers.

**Now let's talk about the last step for being of the same mind.  
the most important step.**

**Think about Jesus.**

**if there's anything you remember from this sermon. Remember this.**

**Think about Jesus.**

Jesus is the example of  
& the power for  
& the goal of unity.

Think about him. v. 5

*Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus*

Think about Jesus.

And God tells us exactly what to think

This section reads like an ancient hymn to be recited together.

A creed. A proclamation.

So here's what we're going to do, Lord willing.

I'm going to explain what it says about Jesus.

then, we're going to stand up and proclaim it together.

then - I'd encourage you to memorize it so you can think about it.

To be of the same mind,

Think about Jesus

v. 6

*who, though he was in the form of God.*

Jesus always has the majesty of God.

He is always the glory of God and God.

Everything God is he is.

700 years before Jesus was born, Isaiah saw him.

This is John 12 & Is 6

Isaiah saw the Son of God exalted. glorified.

seated on his throne

just the edge of his royal robe filled God's whole temple.

There were angels surrounding him.

They covered covered themselves in front of his splendor

They kept shouting to each each other - about Jesus

*Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory!*

Isaiah saw the holiness of God

the holiness of Jesus before he was born.

so he cried out,

*Woe is me, for I am ruined, for I am a man of unclean lips....*

Jesus Christ is always the resplendence of God.  
He let James and John and Peter see his majesty for a second  
They were on a mountain, and suddenly - - (Matt 17:2)

*he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun and his garments became as white as light...*

Peter started babbling about building tents.  
then, God the Father declared -  
*This is my beloved Son*

James, John, and Peter fell on their faces.  
Jesus is *in the form of God*.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe Jesus is an angel.  
Mormons as physical offspring of a god who became a god.  
Muslims as a great, miracle working prophet.  
Spiritual people as a great teacher in touch with the divine.  
Naturalists as a political revolutionary trying to free people from oppression.

But Jesus is *in the form of God*.  
Jesus always is God and all his glory.

But he didn't use it.  
God is the only being who has real rights.  
He is the only one to whom things are really owed.  
Everything else comes from him.  
But Jesus didn't use his rights.  
v.6

*he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.*

He had every right to make everything serve him without needing to be born.

But he chose to become a human.  
To get clothed in weakness.  
pains. frailty.

He gave up his rights.  
v. 7

*he emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.*

God emptied himself of his rights.  
How?  
He took on the full nature of a human.

He took the form of a servant.  
The word is actually for a Roman slave.  
Jesus took the nature of someone who had no rights.  
Who was totally owned.  
Whose entire life was at the disposal of a master.  
Whose whole life was obedience.

Because that's what we're supposed to be.  
God doesn't owe us anything.  
We owe him everything.

But the Son of God gave up his rights to glory  
he became one of us.

Why?  
to save death-bound mortals  
to forgive traitors against God

We need to be clear.  
Jesus did not empty himself of his divine power at all.  
He added human nature.

This is important because lately there's a specific lie about Jesus spreading.  
Some newer false teachers say Jesus emptied himself of his power.  
Like he separated his deity away while on earth.  
They say Jesus worked by faith in the Spirit, like us.

so they say we can do whatever Jesus could do if we have enough of the Spirit.  
Like speaking things into existence.  
Doing miracles.  
Manifesting reality but with Christian words

Like using the name of Jesus without real content or context  
Or other Christian sounding phrases like Hallelujah  
To somehow manifest spiritual authority in the world

This teaching is a desecration of Jesus.  
And, with respect to us, it's ridiculous  
Jesus did not put his deity aside at all  
And we can't be little miracle-working Jesuses

But thank God!  
He *did* put his rights aside  
why? to save you and I from getting condemned!

Jesus gave up rights to give us the right to be children of God  
The Son gave up his his freedom to free us from hell  
The Messiah gave up his life so we'd live forever

Church!  
Let's think about Jesus.  
Then we'll *be of the same mind*.

Think about how Jesus put aside his own interests  
v. 7

*and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

Jesus totally obeyed the Father, even to death.  
Do we ever complain - inside or out loud - about how hard we've got it?

But Jesus did nothing from ambition. Conceit.  
Jesus didn't think about his own interests.  
He thought about the interests of others.

That's how important Jesus sees us - his disciples.  
death on a cross.

Remember the point of this text?  
*Be of the same mind*  
How? Think about Jesus

The righteous one who gave up his rights.  
The savior who gave up his safety.  
The glorious one who permitted his own shame.

For you  
to bring you to God.

He didn't think of his own interests, but the interests of others.

Do you know why?  
Do you know the result of Jesus' slavery to death?  
v. 9

*Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name.*

Jesus obeyed, therefore God exalted him.  
Resurrected him. Glorified him.  
Publicly gave him a name - a title. -  
that title is in v. 11 - Lord. YHWH.

God had a goal in exalting Christ.  
And remember - to be of one mind -  
we have to get the goal right

And watch this - here was God's goal in exalting Jesus  
vv. 10-11

*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*

God the Father and God the Son had a goal.  
A purpose.  
To make every knee fall before the glory of the Son.  
To make every mouth open in praise.  
To admit something.  
To say something.

To say something God promised 700 years before then!  
God promised this - Is 45:22

*I am God and there is no other... to me every knee shall bow, every tongue will swear - only in the LORD, it shall be said of me, are righteousness and strength...*

Why did God the Father raise up the Son?  
To make every being in the universe fall before him.

to make every tongue proclaim -  
Jesus Christ is the Lord God Almighty.  
he is God and there is no other.

The only real God is the one who was born a Jew 2000 years ago  
in a place with a bunch of animals

he was stripped naked and shamed and mocked,  
he was publicly raised above the ground on timber,

he was nailed to it. bleeding from everywhere.  
Slowly dying because he couldn't breathe.  
He was condemned in our place.

Therefore, God exalted him.  
With a goal  
So all would proclaim he alone is God.  
There is no other. He is Lord.

Remember how to be of one mind?

1. Know it's possible.  
This God does it.
2. Get the goal right.  
Heres the goal:  
that every tongue confesses that Jesus the Messiah is the only God.

*be of the same mind*

one day I promise you on the authority of God's word  
Mohammad will bow and confess that Jesus is the only God.  
Josef Stalin will bow and confess that there is no other Lord.  
Satan himself will be forced into the dust, made to say Jesus Christ is the Lord

That will happen.  
And that Lord is very alive, exalted right now.  
Think about Jesus.

that's Step 4 toward being of the same mind  
Think about Jesus.

Remember God's point in this whole section.  
*Be of the same mind..*

God gives us four steps to do that.

1st step: Know it's possible.

There is one Lord who will make every knee bow.  
he will unify his people.  
It's possible.

2nd step: Get the goal right.

what's the goal?  
striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.  
proclaiming together that Jesus is the only true God.

The goal is taking this message across the face of the earth.

going and making disciples of every tongue, tribe, people and nation.  
Get the goal right.

3rd step: Watch out for obstacles.

Did Jesus cling to his actual rights? No.  
Should we hold on to perceived or derived rights?  
To ambition? To wanting praise?  
No. Watch out for obstacles.

4th step: Think about Jesus.

He's the example for unity,  
the power for unity,  
and the goal of unity.

If you remember anything, remember these last verses.

Remember Jesus.  
let's close by standing and proclaiming who God is together.  
If you're able, stand with me.  
let's proclaim now together

*He, 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 slave, 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. 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.*

Amen. Amen. Amen.

You may be seated.

Brothers and sisters.

let's *Be of the same mind*  
Know it's possible, Get the goal right  
Watch out for obstacles, think about Jesus.

God says

*Be of the same mind.*

Let's pray.

Great God

We praise you for the Son's humility for your glory

For our eternal life

help us *be of the same mind*

for the sake of the name of the Son of God - the LORD

we ask, amen