Believers in Unity

Philippians 4:1-7

Introduction:

Psalm 133:1-2

“Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for ﻿﻿brethren to dwell together in unity! *It is* like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments.”

I. Features of the Ointment – 4:1

“Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.”

“Therefore” refers back to chapter 3

A. My Beloved - ἀγαπητοὶ

He did not just like them, he loved them.

He did not just love them, he loved them dearly.

B. Longed for - ἐπιπόθητοι

He not only wanted to see them, he desired to see them. He was homesick for them. He had pictures of them – in his mind.

He remembered their gestures; He remembered the bear-hug of the jailor; the friendly handshake of Lydia; the shy handshake of the former demon-possessed girl.

He longed to see them again, and he probably did!

C. Brothers - ἀδελφοί –

They had the same father through Jesus, their brother. Paul was not ashamed to call them brothers. Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers (Heb 2:11)

D. Joy and Crown - χαρὰ καὶ στέφανός

1. The Joy had to do with the Present Time.

He had memories of being with them, and the prospect of seeing them again.

2. The Crown Looked to the Future Time.

He would one day receive the crown at the judgment seat of Christ. They would be a part of that presentation.

E. Beloved - ἀγαπητοί

Just in case they did not hear I the first time, he says it again, “Beloved ones.”

II. The Fly in the Ointment – 4:2–5

A. The Women – 4:2a﻿

“I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche”

1. Their Names - Identity

Euodia - “prosperous journey.”

Syntyche - “pleasant acquaintance.”

2. Their Problem: 4:2b

﻿“to be of the same mind in the Lord.” (They were not of the same mind.)

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They labored with Paul in the Gospel labored with me in the gospel, When Paul was first in Philippi, (Acts 16) these ladies labored with Him in the gospel. Others were with him also: He names only one - with Clement also,

Some ask, “Is this Clement of Alexandria, Egypt pr Clement of Rome?”

My answer is that he is that he is Clement of Philippi! And the rest of my fellow workers, they are all believers: (their) names *are* in ﻿﻿the Book of Life - The roll of believers.

B. The Workers – 4:3-5

“And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.”

One in particular and others that he will recruit.

1. He wanted them to be Helpful – 4:3

These ladies needed help, someone to come alongside and show them the way.

“true companion” – σύζυγε is the first and only one named. It is not a proper name. He is probably referring to Epaphroditus

He, along with the others, are to be helpful to these ladies. Not putting them down but helping them up to where they once were and beyond.

2. He wanted them to be Happy – 4:4

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“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!”

Rejoicing is in the Lord. The answer to all distressing thoughts is the Lord. He is too wise to make a mistake, too loving to be unkind, too powerful to be overcome, too involved with us to be aloof.

How can we think of the Lord and not rejoice?

* The Lord can restore the years the locusts have eaten (Joel 2:25).
* He can bind up the broken hearted (Isa.61:1).
* He can make evil become a means of grace.

The classic example of this is as follows:

Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, thrown into prison on a trumped up charge. When he saw his brothers again, he was second in the land of Egypt and could have his brothers killed on the spot. But he said to his brothers, but as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* ﻿﻿God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many (try 3or 4 million) people alive. The good result does not excuse the sin, but it does show that God is not thwarted by the evil intent of man or any other creature.

3. He wanted them to be Holy – 4:5

“Let your ﻿﻿gentleness be known to all men. ﻿﻿The Lord *is* at hand.”

Gentleness means “yieldedness” - It means to be ready to yield in anything that is “simply of self” for the Lord’s sake. Getting your own way is set aside in favor of His way.

Remember the Context: The two ladies were at odds. One or both of them may well need to “give in” on one or more points so that the work of the Lord will not be hindered.

The best argument is given last in that verse; “The Lord is at hand”. That is certainly a good reason for yielding on any point.

“Rejoicing” is Paul’s motto for a happy life. The coming of the Lord is his motto for a holy life.

III. The Furtherance of the Ointment – 4:6-7

A. Our Reservations – 4:6a

﻿Be anxious (μεριμνᾶτε) for nothing,

Jesus put it this way:

“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But ﻿﻿seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:31-33).

He is not saying, “Don’t plan for these things,” but don’t panic. Do all you can do then trust the Lord.

B. Our Requests – 4:6b

“but in everything by prayer and supplication, with ﻿﻿thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; “

* Prayer - προσευχῇ - is the general word for prayer.
* Supplication – δεήσει- making specific requests.
* Thanksgiving – εὐχαριστίας should be first in all prayers.
* Requests - αἰτήματα – specific items asked for.
* Let them be known to God. (You have not because you ask not - James 4:2)

C. Our Rest - (Peace) – 4:7

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“and ﻿﻿the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

1. We have Peace with God

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Romans 5:1

“Therefore, ﻿﻿having been justified by faith, ﻿﻿we have ﻿﻿peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,”

You have trusted God with the most important need you will ever have – your eternal destiny. This peace is given at the time of our salvation. It is a gift from God and cannot be taken away.

We were enemies of God. Now we are His friends. “What a friend we have in Jesus.”

2. We Know the God of Peace

The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and ﻿﻿the God of peace will be with you.

3. The Peace of God

Our verse deals with the peace of God. It relates to the inner tranquility of a believer’s close walk with God. Don’t try to understand it – you can’t. It is beyond understanding. This is the peace which is available to all those believers who trust God in the good times and the bad times.

Who don’t worry, but turn it over to God in faith. Who ask God for the things they need and trust Him to answer their prayers in the way.

He sees best. And leave it there!

This peace will guard your heart (emotions) and your mind (thoughts) by (ἐν) Jesus Christ. It puts a garrison around you on all sides. That leaves only the top open. Who is up there at the top? - God.

Nothing can get at you without coming through Him. Are you satisfied with that? Welcome to the place called “the peace of God”.

Conclusion: