

EUODIA AND SYNTYCHE

Philippians 4:2

Introduction

--- Paul had a very good relationship with the church at Philippi. Philippians 1:8, "For God bears witness to me how much I long for you all with the tender love of Christ Jesus." (**The Bible of the Americas**). Therefore, he could talk to them publicly or privately with confidence.

--- Euodia and Syntyche were two Christian women who attended the **church in Philippi**. They were sisters of influence who "*labored with me in the gospel*" and to labor with Paul in the gospel, they had to be "of one mind," the mind of Paul. They must be well united **in the gospel**, because otherwise their "service" would have been hindrance rather than help.

--- *Danger of forming parties*. Other sisters could say "I agree with Evodia" and still others could say "I agree with Syntyche" and thus there was a danger of forming parties in the church.

---- The apostle Paul exhorts them to put an end to their differences not only for their own salvation but also for the good of the church there.

--- The specific differences between Euodia and Syntyche are not mentioned in the New Testament, but all differences can grow and produce sides; that is why Paul's exhortation was very appropriate.

-- "*I implore ... that they be of the same mind*". In a church as faithful and pure as this, any disharmony would seem serious. We do not know the details of this case, but however great or small the difficulty between these two sisters is, they are exhorted to end it and have the same mind.

1 Corinthians 1:10, "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may all agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be entirely united in one mind and one mind."

--- This counsel is necessary for the church, as it is for marriage.

--- The church is the body of Christ, and the members of the physical body are perfectly coordinated to function properly.

Galatians 5:19-21, Paul gives us a list of the works of the flesh. In the exhortation to these two sisters, he does not specify a certain "work of the flesh" but certainly to be "of one mind" it was necessary for them to take very seriously the works of the flesh. Paul says (2 Corinthians 13:5), "Examine yourselves" because these two sisters were in danger of being guilty of some of the works of the flesh.

-- "*faithful companion*." Some (e.g., Vine and Hendriksen) believe that the Greek word, **SUNZUGOS**, is a proper noun (Sinziigo or Syzygus), but if it is a proper

noun here, there is no other example of such usage. The Philippians knew who he meant. Paul appointed him to be a peacemaker.

-- "*Help these who labored with me in the gospel.*" Euodia and Syntyche, like Lydia (Acts 16:15), manifested a willingness to collaborate in the gospel ("they labored ... with me"), but to labor with Paul in the gospel, they had to be "of one mind," well united in the gospel, because otherwise their "service" would have been hindrance rather than help.

--- Paul exhorts them to "be of one mind" and of course, to cooperate with Paul they had to be of the same mind with Paul.

--- Paul says in 1 Tim. 2:12 "I do not permit a woman to teach, nor to exercise dominion over a man," but a woman has much work to do, even that of teaching (Titus 2:3-5). There are always appropriate subjects that sisters of age and experience should teach younger sisters, there are even sensitive matters that must be dealt with frankly so that they understand them well. The woman must be in subjection, but she must also participate in teaching, as well as in serving in various ways. "Priscilla and Aquila took him (Apollos) apart and set him more exactly the way of God" (Acts 18:26).

--- Rom. 16:1 speaks of Phoebe, a "servant of the church in Cenchrea." See also Acts. 9:36-41, another very helpful woman. Among the requirements for a widow to "be put on the list" (1 Tim. 5:9-12) are these: "If she has succored the afflicted; if she has practiced every good work." It is likely that these widows not only receive help from the church (5:16), but also that they have been in some way "servants" of the church.

--- Every preacher of the gospel recognizes (and appreciates) the importance of the service of faithful sisters. It is another illustration of what Paul says in 1 Cor. 12:21, that no member can say to others, "I have no need of you."

-- "*with Clement also and the other collaborators of mine whose names are in the book of life.*" See also Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12; and the same idea is expressed in Luc. 10:17 and Heb. 12:23.

--- But if these two sisters had refused to be of one mind to help and not hinder the work of Paul and companions in the gospel, would they have had the same hope of having their names written in the book of life?

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