

Lesson Notes:

## **He's not heavy, He's my Brother**

The church at Philippi was a melting pot of people in Paul's time. It contained a wide array of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The church at Philippi contained Greeks whose culture dominated the Roman Empire; Jews, who prided themselves as God's chosen people; Barbarians, who were illiterate and spoke no Greek; Scythians who were a crude aggressive people and the slaves who were at the bottom of the social ladder. Paul's task was to bind this melting pot of people with different backgrounds and heritage into one united church living for Jesus Christ. Below are God's principles for sharing the love of Christ as brothers.

### **Scriptural Principles**

#### **How are we to act towards one another:**

- 1) **Don't oppress one another** – In **Ezekiel 45:9** God tells his people not to take the belongings of each other. Have square and equitable dealings.
- 2) **Don't be conceited** – James warned the Jews in **Acts 15: 14-16** not to be conceited because God will take a chosen people from the gentiles before he returns to rebuild David's temple.
- 3) **Remember that the love of Christ binds us together. Don't allow Divisions.** – Paul tells us in **1 Corinthians 1:10** not to allow divisions among us but be joined together in the same mind and judgment for Jesus Christ. In **Philippians 4:2** Paul implored Euodia and Synthyche to stop bickering and start acting like followers of Christ.
- 4) **Work together for the Kingdom of the Lord** – In **Philippians 1:27** Paul encourages the Philippians to put aside their differences and work together for the common good of Jesus Christ.
- 5) **I am my brothers keeper.** – Paul told the Philippians in **Philippians 2:3-4** to humble themselves and focus on the welfare of others instead of themselves. In **Matthew 22:39** Jesus told the Pharisees that the second great commandment was to love thy neighbor as you love yourself.
- 6) **Praise one another** - Epaphroditus was a runner for Paul. He would run long distances delivering Paul's letters to the churches in Asia Minor. He was literally Paul's right arm and although little is known about him he played a major role in the spread of the holy gospel among the churches that Paul fathered. In **Philippians 2:25-30** Paul tells the Philippians what a great man Epaphroditus is. He called Epaphroditus a brother and fellow soldier in Christ. He spoke about

Epaphroditus's friendship and what it meant to him. Paul set's an example of how we are to speak of others to fellow men.

- 7) **Let Bygones be Bygones** – In **Philippians 3: 12 – 16** Paul tells the church members at Philippi that they are to forget their differences and press forward as one to further the cause of Jesus Christ. In **Jeremiah 31:34** we read that God not only forgives our sins but he chooses to no longer remember them as well when we accept his gift of salvation.