



Big Idea: Hear and heed God's call to harmony.

Five Essential Exhortations to Harmony in the Church

1.) Be *Mindful* (v. 2).

-- v. 2 - "*Euodia and Syntyche*"

-- There is not a theological disagreement, but an interpersonal problem.

-- Even the best of us can be enticed by the enemy to stir us conflict and division.

-- **Be mindful of the truth that *Harmony* in the church matters immensely to God.**

-- "*plead*" - This is not an offhanded request, but an urgent exhortation.

-- The discord between two women in the church is so urgent that Paul addresses it in a community letter.

-- God means for the church to be a demonstration on earth of the unity that eternally exists within the Trinity (John 17:20-23).

-- As God's people, harmony should be a paramount purpose of our participation in the church.

2.) Be *Intentional* (v. 3, Ephesians 4:3).

-- v. 3 - Paul is calling upon mature church members to protect the congregation from the enemy of discord.

-- **We are called together by God to *Pursue* harmony diligently and *Practice* it daily.**

-- The church is blessed when we view ourselves as "discord destroyers."

-- Respond to every sentiment of discord with the opposite virtue.

-- Don't wait around for harmony magically to emerge; be intentional about bringing about harmony in the church.

3.) Be *Joyful* (v. 4).

-- Rejoicing in the Lord puts petty problems in perspective.

-- Anyone focused on anything petty cannot be focused on Christ, for there is nothing petty with Him.

-- In the midst of petty quarreling in Philippi, Paul says: "*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!*"

-- While our circumstances may or may not inspire rejoicing, true knowledge of God always will.

-- Harmony in the church happens when we resolve to *Rejoice* in Jesus.

-- To the degree that the all of us are sincerely rejoicing in the Lord, harmony will happen among us (Colossians 3:11).

4.) Be *Gentle* (v. 5a).

-- What we say is not nearly as important as how we say it.

-- Gentleness ought to characterize our *Conversation*

-- v. 5a - Paul is commanding gentleness that is obvious to everyone, everywhere, all the time (Colossians 3:12).

-- A gentle spirit toward others demonstrates the grace of God in us.

-- "Nothing is so strong as gentleness, nothing so gentle as real strength."

5.) *Beware* (v. 5b).

-- v. 5 - "*Know that the Lord is near.*"

-- Proverbs 6:16-19 - Notice what culminates this list of things God hates: the one who stirs up dissension among brothers.

-- Titus 3:10-11 - Divisive people do not belong to Christ.

-- If we really believe the Lord is near, we will want nothing to do with *Divisiveness*

Conclusion

-- Harmony matters so much to God, because harmony between us is a critical aspect of God's eternal glory in Christ (Ephesians 2:15-16).

-- To be all in for Christ is, necessarily, to be all in for harmony in Christ.