



Philippians 2

Today we're going to look at the reality that **GOD SPEAKS THROUGH OTHERS.**

Not everyone who speaks for God is really speaking for God. We have to be wise and discerning. Remember, when God speaks to you through others, He will confirm it in your own spirit. However, there are some built in assumptions that go with that.

1. If you are living your life in close relationships with Jesus, spending good time in God's Word, being obedient to what HE tells you, and allowing the Holy Spirit to continually mold, shape and change you... then it will resonate with you if it's from God. It may be new, it may be a reminder. But you'll know.
2. If you are not living out a life of worship, walking humbly with your God, then you will now know of it's God or not. Instead, you'll be frustratedly confused, and will have to choose what sounds and feels best. And that's daunting and scary on it's own.

Proverbs 19:20 - "Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future."

Proverbs 19:27 - "Cease to hear instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge."

Proverbs 15:22 - "Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed."

INTRODUCTION:

Paul knew the importance of being together as committed followers of Jesus. He knew what would happen if we didn't really remain tight. In fact, he often warned against not being together. And, one major reason God designed us to be together, is so He could speak to us through each other.

[X]Why God speaks through others (Philippians 2:1-2)

He starts off in [verse 1](#) with this statement - *"So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy..."* He is assuming that this is already present in each of their lives. This was personal for Paul ([verse 2](#) *"complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind."*). He knew that if they couldn't stay unified, it would compromise the mission of making known the transformative power of God's Word. So why does God speak through other? To bring unity among the believers. There are specifics to the purpose God chose to do this. God speaks through others so we'll be:

SAME MIND ("LIKE-MINDED")

- It's literally what you set your mind on ("*phroneō*"). It's having the same understanding (which is what you place your emphasis on). OK- so we should set our minds on the same thing. That's how we become like-minded. And when that happens, we can trust those that God uses to speak into our lives.
- [Verse 5](#) - *"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus..."*
- [Romans 12:16](#) - *"Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight."* You need others in you life- one reason you're told not to be wise in your own eyes.
- This doesn't mean that we all have the same thoughts- in fact, that's why God speaks through others- because all you have is all you have (in your own mind). You need those other minds in order for you to have a sound and round mind.
- United in mind is to have the mind of Christ. You can't get that fullness and perspective by yourself.

SAME LOVE ("identical in love")

- The Greek word here is "agape." -benevolent and brotherly love.
- He wants us to have the same love. Not one that is based on human standards and preferences. The same love is more about the source than the style or model. If we are all drawing from the same source, it's a lot easier for God to use others who are of that same love to speak into your life.
- If we all have the same love, we all have the same source for love. And, we all have the same way to love... in Jesus name and in Jesus' way. Our love should always look like His love. When that happens, we will have identical love- His love.
- So, what does that love look like? Well, when He speaks to us through others, we see it lived out here in Verses 6-8 - *"...who, 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 servant, 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. "*

FULL ACCORD ("united in spirit")

- "Sympsychos" is the Greek word here that means united in Spirit.
- Acts 1:14 - *"All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers."*
- Uniting souls is the bigger picture here. And without God using others to speak to us, we live out a low budget film instead of the epic blockbuster He is really directing.
- Harmonious living in one accord.
- (Matthew Henry's Commentary) - *"Being of one accord... unanimously agreeing in the great things of God and keeping the unity of the Spirit in other differences."*

ONE MIND ("one in purpose")

- "Phronountes" is the Greek word here that is very similar to the first one we looked at. The emphasis here though is on purpose. Having the same

purpose that we all connect to is imperative if God is going to use us to speak to each other in profitable ways.

- One mind here means one purpose.
- When we let God speak through others into our lives, we live out our purpose with a much greater impact in this life, for the life to come. We see what that looks like in verses 12-18 - *“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.”*

In order for us to really have these four character traits of Jesus alive in us as a church, we must make them true and living in our individual lives. This requires a tremendous amount of humility though. And, verses 3-4 tell us why we must walk in humility. Verses 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.”*

[X]The others God uses to speak (Philippians 2:19-30)

Here are two accounts in verses 19-30. But let’s just pick one for our purposes today. Verses 19-24 - *“I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know Timothy’s proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.”*

Paul is talking about Timothy, and he was sending him to the church there in Philippi, and making a case for him being trustworthy as one who God would speak to them through.

V. 20 - He had genuine concern for them as a children of God

"For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare."

- Their welfare was his priority.
- There is *genuine* care for each one as a person, not a case or project.

V. 21 - He was committed to the interests of God

"For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ."

- The consistency of his life speaks for itself.
- He pursued the ways of God (which gave him credibility for God to speak through him to the people).
- Humility is what drove Timothy to seek God's interests over his own.
- Seeking our own interests at the expense of Jesus' is a very common things for Christians. Those that seek their own interests are dangerous to let speak into your life, and are not sent by God or with His word for you.

V. 22 - He was a proven servant in the work of God

"But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel."

- He was a true servant to God first before a servant to the people. BTW- the former will cause the latter.
- The Bible is clear that Timothy and his ministry had definitely been proven. His leadership was proven in other areas of service. He was to be trusted into his new area of ministry, and to a broader group of people. He was, as we say, leading by example. This is what gave him the authority in his service to lead, love and speak into the people's life as he did.