

# A Declaration of Dependence

10/6/96

Reading: [Romans 12:9-13](#)

Text: [Philippians 2:1-8](#)

Introduction:

## 300 Years ago: John Donne "Holy Sonnets"

No man is an island, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the continent, a part of the maine, if a clod bee washed away by the sea, Europe is the lesse . . . Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee.

## 30 Years ago: Paul Simon "I am a Rock"

I am a rock, I am an Island and a rock feels no pain and an island never cries.

## 2 Years later: John Barth "The Floating Opera"

Our friends float past; we become involved with them; they float on, and we must rely on hearsay or lose track of them completely; they float back again, and we must either renew our friendship--catch up to date--or find that they and we don't comprehend each other any more.

## Philippi 2000 years ago:

- Phillipi was much like our society, a diverse, bustling metropolis, set at a crossroad of trade and political life.
- Individualism always threatens unity in a local church
  1. Dedicated women at odds --Euodia and Syntyche [4:2](#)
  2. Pride and selfish ambition put the body at risk.

## 3 Parts To Rediscovering Community: [Philippians 2:1-8](#)

## 1. Be One. [v. 2](#)

### 4 times he stresses importance of thinking in group terms

[Philippians 2:2](#) Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

### A Group mentality

- Thoughts, emotions, & my very soul are incorporated
- The goal is to be one with the rest

### Not Cookie Cutter Christians

- Not uniformity, where everyone has the same opinion and same tastes or same style clothing.
- Not Union: "Tying 2 cats together by the tail is union, but not unity."
- Be ONE, Have the same mind, same love: Unity!

[John 17:21-23](#) that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

### How Do We Do This?

## 2. Be Humble [v.3](#)

[Philippians 2:3](#) Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

### A strike at the "me" orientation of our culture

- Dangerous words in a society that buys mill. of "Self" mag
- Dangerous: best selling book: was "Looking Out For #1"

### If the church is serious about unity, must have Humility

- Oneness is an impossible dream with selfish ambition & conceit
- Not self-depreciation, not lack of confidence: HUMILITY

### A conscious decision to allow others to be honored.

[Proverbs 15:33](#) The fear of the **LORD** is instruction in wisdom, and humility goes before honor.

- This was a constant discussion Jesus had with His disciples

[Matthew 18:1](#) "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

[Matthew 20:21](#) "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom."

[Matthew 23:11](#) But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.

**Those who follow Jesus, will be one and they will be humble.**

## 3. Be Concerned [v. 4](#)

[Philippians 2:4](#) Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

### Marriage will not work with selfish people

- Before He said "Wives be subject" and Husbands love your wives,

[Ephesians 5:21](#) Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.

- There is a "NEW" idea today: "Guys Do It All The Time"

### Be concerned for church family, too.

- Absenteeism: Compare this to a spouse coming back home "when it's convenient."
- Be concerned about sick.
- Be concerned about emotionally hurting.
- Be concerned about spiritually hurting.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be concerned about the joys.</li><li>• Be concerned about the victories.</li><li>• Be concerned about the successes.</li></ul> |
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## Close:

### What if Jesus bought into the attitudes of the "me" generation?

- He would have clung to His preeminence at any cost--our souls
- He would never have emptied Himself to become a servant.
- He would never have gone to the cross.

### [v. 5-8](#) Have **THIS** mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus.

- For too long Christians have CRIPPLED the church by our inability to think beyond ourselves.
- If the church is ever to be a body--a living, breathing, vital organism--members must recognize the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few.