



Bible Student's NotebookTM

The Herald of His Grace

Weekly

Presenting *every man perfect in Christ Jesus*. Colossians 1:28

Volume XXI
Issue 504

Be Likeminded

(abridged)

Part 2 of 2

by — Daniel Andersen

Chapter 10

THE MIND OF CHRIST: THE ULTIMATE PATTERN

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus (Philippians 2:5).

This exhortation is in a context which clearly indicates Paul's concern for the interactions and interrelationships of these believers amongst themselves. He is concerned that their fellowship be characterized by love and harmony, by compassion and accord, without strife or vain-glory. Each should humbly esteem the other as above or better than self. Rather than living in a self-centered manner, thinking only of oneself and one's own needs and affairs, each should be considering the welfare and the needs of others. Each one's attitude or disposition or *leaning* should be the same as was displayed by Christ. So again Christ is the example of the way Christians should behave amongst themselves. Rather than seeking His own welfare, rather than seeking to please Himself, He displayed an entirely different attitude. He emptied Himself. He humbled Himself.

It certainly is true that Philippians 2:5-11 speaks volumes about what we call *Christology*, the study of the Person and the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. But we should not lose sight of Paul's main point here. It is not his purpose to give a doctrinal development of the nature of the Godhead, but to extend the exhortations of :1-4, giving strength and focus to them. Christ is the supreme example of condescension, of one who, instead of pursuing a path of grasping and self-seeking, pursued the path of humility and self-abnegation. He stooped. He emptied Himself. He left the *morphe theos* (form of

God) and took upon Himself a *morphe doulou* (form of a bonds slave).

I particularly enjoy Phillips' rendering of :1-5 and include it here. Notice that the word *phroneo* also occurs twice in :2 ("be likeminded" and "of one mind," KJV).

Now if your experience of Christ's encouragement and love means anything to you, if you have known something of the fellowship of his Spirit, and all that it means in kindness and deep sympathy, do make my best hopes for you come true! Live together in harmony [phroneo], live together in love, as though you had only one mind [phroneo] and one spirit between you. Never act from motives of rivalry or personal vanity, but in humility think more of one another than you do of yourselves. None of you should think only of his own affairs, but each should learn to see things from other people's point of view. Let Christ Jesus be your example as to what your attitude [phroneo] should be.

Now on to the next reference to be examined.

But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care [phroneo] of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful [phroneo], but ye lacked opportunity (Philippians 4:10).

This clearly shows that the word we are investigating does not refer to mind in the sense of reasoning or grasping matters of intellectual content, but rather refers to mind in the sense of attitude or leaning or disposition. The Philippians once had a "mindedness" concerning Paul which was sensitive, concerned, and compas-

(see **LIKEMINDED**, page 4435) ↗

Bible Student's Notebook™ Weekly

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This free weekly electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - union in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6);
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

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ABBREVIATION KEY

<u>Scripture Version</u>	Concordance (Knoch)
(Unless otherwise noted all Scripture quotations are taken from the Bible Student's Version).	CL: A Critical Lexicon and Concordance (Bullinger)
CV: Concordant Literal Version	CWS: Complete Word Study Dictionary (Zodhiates)
DAR: Darby Translation	FoS: Figures of Speech (Bullinger)
DT: Dabhar Translation	SEC: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance
FF: Ferrar Fenton Bible	TGL: Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon
KJV: King James Version	UR: Unsearchable Riches
RE: Rotterdam's Emphasized Bible	VED: Vine's Expository Dictionary
WT: Weymouth Translation	YAC: Young's Analytical Concordance
YLT: Young's Literal Translation	
<u>Reference Sources</u>	<u>Reference Notations</u>
AA: Analytical Analysis (Welch)	cf. – compare
BDB: Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon	e.g. – for example
CB: Companion Bible Notes & Appendixes (Bullinger)	et al. – and others
CC: Concordant Commentary (Knoch)	etc. – et cetera (and so on)
CKC: Concordant Keyword	ff. – and the following
	i.e., – that is

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LIKEMINDED (continued from front page)

sionate. Paul rejoiced that they were once again of this “mind” concerning him and his state. Many translators follow the *King James Version* and use the words “care” and “caring” here. We give Phillips’ translation to further indicate the sense of this word.

It has been a great joy to me that after all this time you have shown such interest [phroneo] in my welfare. I don't mean that you had forgotten me, but up till now you had no opportunity of expressing your concern [phroneo].

Chapter 11

THINGS ABOVE – THINGS ON THE EARTH

Here is another familiar verse where the Greek word *phroneo* is used.

Set your affection [phroneo] on things above, not on things on the earth (Colossians 3:2).

The ideas of affection, leaning, disposition, attitude that we have discussed as the meaning of *phroneo*, are clearly indicated here. Some translators simply render it, “Mind [phroneo] the things above, not the things on the earth.” Phillips, with his characteristic touch, renders it,

Give your heart [phroneo] to the heavenly things, not to the passing things of earth.

We should ask just what Paul meant by “the things above” and “the things on the earth” in this passage. I can hardly believe this phrase describes material objects or things in a physical sense. He has just spoken of the Risen Christ in His place of glory at the right hand of God. Would not “the things above” then be those truths, those thoughts that concern the glories of Christ in His resurrection life wherein He “lives unto God,” as Paul puts it in Romans 6:10? Perhaps the “things on the earth” refers to those legalisms so characteristic of so many religious systems. Paul had just queried (2:20-22), “... if ye are dead with Christ ... why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances [Greek, *dogmatizo*] ... after the commandments and doctrines of men?” So perhaps the “things on the earth” of 3:2 is a reference back to all those ritualistic rules and regulations that cater to fleshly pride, to the many things discussed in 2:16-23 (or perhaps 2:8-23). Such things direct attention away from the Person of Christ and His work and His glory.

The moral dimension must also be included here, for in 3:5 Paul speaks directly of a set of familiar vices as members which are “upon the earth” (same phrase as in 3:2) and which are to be placed in the state of death. The instruction to “mortify therefore” in 3:5 is more clearly rendered “put to death.” Here is Moffatt’s translation of Colossians 3:5-6.

So put to death those members that are on earth: sexual vice, impurity, appetite, evil desire, and lust (which is as bad as idolatry), things which bring down God's anger on the sons of disobedience.

This appeals to me as a practical application of Paul’s exhortation in Romans 6:11 to “reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin ... in Christ Jesus our Lord.” It is not a “dying daily” or “crucifying self daily” as some exhort. It is an accounting or reckoning that is done once for all and is to be considered accomplished. Then these vices can have no more influence than something or someone that is dead. This thought fits Paul’s ongoing exhortation in the context: “you have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge according to the image of the One Who created him” (Colossians 3:9-10).

In close association with the thoughts from Colossians 3 is Philippians 3:19 where Paul describes some who “mind [phroneo] earthly things.” Their *mindedness*, their disposition, their leaning, is toward self-indulgence and immorality, as Paul makes clear in the context. Here is the *New English Bible* rendering of Philippians 3:17-20.

Agree together, my friends, to follow my example. You have us for a model; watch those whose way of life conforms to it. For, as I have often told you, and now tell you with tears in my eyes, there are many whose way of life makes them enemies of the cross of Christ. They are heading for destruction, appetite is their god, and they glory in their shame. Their minds are set [phroneo] on earthly things. We, by contrast, are citizens of heaven, and from heaven we expect our deliverer to come, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Clearly the word we are investigating has to do with attitude or disposition, and with thoughts of an emotional nature, not purely intellectual. Wherever this word occurs, it appears to speak of the *mind-set*, disposition or inclination.

Chapter 12

WHAT CAN WE CONCLUDE?

I think we can form certain conclusions as to the kind of unity, the kind of like-mindedness, that Paul was urging and that he so longed for among believers in Christ. It was a unity of inclination and attitude, of feelings and affection. It was a unity that centered in the Person of Christ, not in *Christology*. Of course the study of the Person of Christ is of deep concern to every believer in Him, but I distinguish between the study of the Person of Christ and the act of reaching out in simple faith and commitment to Him. A study can be bookish. It uses facts and information that are looked up and put together in some kind of meaningful, systematic, and consistent form. I do not make light of this, it is certainly important.

Further, the act of simple faith in Christ has as its basis information we find written or hear spoken, and which we grasp with the use of some mental effort. But what is that information? It is that this One, by experiencing intense personal suffering and death, has done a work for God on our behalf that clears us from any taint of sin or offence. And upon the accomplishment of that work He was raised in triumph from the dead! So faith reaches out to One Who lives, a Living Person, and makes a personal commitment to Him for care and safe-keeping! This is something so vital, so dynamic, and so intimately personal. The believer in Christ has related self to a living Savior. There are no barriers, no prerequisites, no exams to pass, no IQ level to attain, no doctrinal qualifications, no fee to pay. No other person, high or low, and no institution, however large or small, dare intrude here and make a judgment or introduce a restriction or demand.

Many there are who have “named the Name of Christ”

as the One they are depending on to relate themselves properly to God and to Whom they have committed themselves for their eternal well-being. They are all over the earth. They are to be found in a great proliferation of religious denominations or in no denomination at all. Most have subscribed to a creed or catechism or confession and have been taught that this is the basis for Christian fellowship and harmony, or even salvation! The creed or catechism or confession enables them to recognize what is correct or orthodox, as distinct from what is error or heresy. But on this basis, what is *orthodox* to one is *error* or *heresy* to another. The fragmentation and division which we see is bound to be the result.

Chapter 13

ONE IN CHRIST

Paul insists that all believers are “one in Christ.” Would that all believers might express the reality of that oneness in their lives and conduct as they relate to other believers.

How can any who have forgiveness in Christ reject any others who have forgiveness in Christ? How can any who have “died with Christ” reject any others who have died with Him? How can any whom Christ loves and accepts not love, in deed as well as in word, others whom Christ loves and accepts? It is the Person of Christ that is the focus, the center, the basis for unity. We shall ever grow in Him. We shall ever learn more of the “things concerning Himself.” We shall doubtless change and should ever seek to correct our understanding concerning Himself, to say nothing of the many other topics throughout the Bible. But that knowledge and understanding should not and *must not* be the basis for unity or accord. No two people can possibly agree on everything!



54 pp, BK

See order form.

Be Likeminded

by — Daniel Anderson

Christ is the basis of Christian unity, and when Paul exhorts believers to be “likeminded” he is not entreating them to comply with the same code or creed, or to conform to the same confession or catechism. Rather he is appealing to them to accept others as Christ, Himself, accepts them.

Believers in Christ come from a diversity of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, a diversity of religious thought, a diversity of understanding and grasp of the Bible. *But it is Christ they all have in common!* It is the Person of the Savior and His acceptance of all who come to Him that must be the basis for accord. Differences should be discussed in an atmosphere of love and respect, seeking to understand the other's point of view, and always seeking to edify or build up one another in the faith in Christ. When the person of Christ is the object of faith and affection, one cannot become overly upset concerning differences in interpretation or differences in understanding about major or minor Bible topics and doctrines. For me to insist that everyone agree with me might be a subtle form of self-justification, the feeling that I must be right. To be argumentative, to be contentious about differences, to continually grind an axe about a particular point of view could be the sowing of discord. Sowing of discord is listed among the things the Lord hates (Proverbs 6:16-19).

Paul never instructed the dismissal of a person for having honest differences of understanding. He may even have urged a venturesome spirit in the consideration of various thoughts that might possibly speak for God or convey divine truth, *i.e.*, "prophecies." A loose paraphrase of I Thessalonians 5:19-21 could be as follows: "Don't stifle the spirit (of inquiry or investigation). Don't despise prophetic utterances. Rather bring them all to the test and retain what is good in them."

Chapter 14

A MAN THAT IS AN HERETIC ... REJECT!

The Greek words for "heretic" and "heresy" do not have the connotations that we, due to our legacy of orthodoxy, attach to these English words today. The Greek words have to do with factiousness and contentiousness, the raising of dissension and the sowing of discord. Thus Paul's admonition in Titus 3:10 is usually misunderstood and has been used as the basis for dismissing or excommunicating persons with different points of view or differing beliefs. Rather Paul was talking about one who is constantly argumentative and contentious. Here is the *New International Version's* rendering of this verse:

Warn a divisive [Greek, hairetikon] person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him.

Such a person has not grasped the real meaning of that

"like-mindedness one toward another according to Christ Jesus." Such a person does not appreciate that a personal relationship to the Living Savior is the dynamic and basis for fellowship and harmony with fellow believers.

Let us examine ourselves. Let us search our hearts. Let us dismiss any attitude of thinking less of others who do not have precisely the same views we have. Let us dismiss any feeling of haughtiness in regard to others who have named the name of Christ. Let us never belittle another who has embraced the same Lord as Savior. Christians should come to the place where they can share their thoughts and convictions regarding the Scriptures without fear of recrimination or ridicule or ostracism.

The Bible is a vast storehouse or treasury with so much to sift through, ponder, discover, and enjoy. Each one should experience the freedom to engage in the quest for its truths without the strait jacket of codified systems of thought to hinder or restrict one's thinking, contemplation and assimilation of its contents. Christ has purchased perfect freedom for His own. This includes freedom from the restrictions of institutionalized thought and religious systems. He has purchased freedom for each believer to enjoy Himself without barrier and hindrance. Let us stand fast in that liberty wherewith He has made us free.

Appendix 1

IN ANTICIPATION OF CERTAIN OBJECTIONS

Do we not read in the Bible of contending earnestly "for the faith which was once [i.e., once and for all] delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3)? Does not Paul speak ►

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of having “*kept the faith*” (II Timothy 4:7)? Doesn’t he admonish Timothy to “*fight the good fight of faith*” (I Timothy 6:12)? Doesn’t he warn that “some shall depart from the faith” (I Timothy 4:1)?

Don’t these passages, and many like them, speak of being loyal to and steadfast in something very specific, in certain clearly identifiable truths? Yes, they certainly do! Yet I challenge anyone to show that these exhortations describe a steadfastness in relation to such codified statements of faith as the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Augsburg Confession, or the Westminster Catechism. (This doesn’t necessarily imply that I consider these erroneous. They are simply typical of systematic doctrinal statements that people subscribe to and which then limit their thinking and determine the boundaries of their faith. There are no substantial reasons beyond the veneration of age, their widespread influence, and the respect generated by tradition, to consider them as complete, correct, and scriptural summaries of things “most surely to be believed.”)

It is my conviction that *faith in Christ* is not complicated by subtle and complex theological concepts. It is a simple reaching out to Him in dependence upon Him and commitment to Him for His care and keeping in all things related to God. It is based upon simple historical truths to which the New Testament writers were witnesses and concerning which they wrote. These are that Christ died and was raised again from the dead. And, most importantly, that that death was in the character of an offering and sacrifice to God on behalf of human beings. By His death a work was completed which delivers me from the guilt and penalty of personal sin. Further, in His being raised from the dead, a work was accomplished by which I have ultimate deliverance from the very consequence of sin, namely death, that has come as a malady upon the human race. One way to summarize this in simple terms is to say that humanity has need in relation to God and that Christ is the answer to that need. So I come to Christ in simple faith and lay hold of Him as the One sufficient for my personal need.

It is a simple linguistic device to speak of the *act* of believing as “faith,” and the *declaration* (“report,” “word,” see Romans 10:16-17) concerning Christ, which is the basis for that act of believing, as “the faith” (“the belief”). This does not make the transaction complicated and fraught with entanglements. To illustrate, imagine the following dialogue as the result of a “hearing” or “report” concerning the weather:

“I *believe* tomorrow will be sunny and warm.” “Is your *belief* strong enough to plan a picnic?”

“True to this *belief*, I’ve arranged for a day at the beach.”

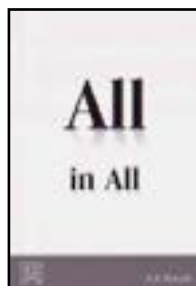
It is in this manner that the act of having faith (believing) in Christ can be called *the faith*. Further, the substance of that which is declared concerning Christ, which produces that act of faith (the acts of believing), can also be called *the faith*. If this thought is associated with such verses as those quoted at the beginning of this appendix, one can see that there are no complications about the matter of simple faith. Thus there is no contradiction with Paul’s thoughts as expressed in this entire presentation.

Appendix 2

A CONCORDANT LISTING OF ALL OCCURRENCES OF THE GREEK WORD PHRONEO IN THE NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

The words translated from *phroneo* are in italics. The reader is urged to read the context or setting of each reference to see if the ideas of mindedness, attitude, feeling, inclination, disposition, fit each occurrence.

- Matthew 16:23 – *Thou savourest* not the things that be of God.
- Mark 8:33 – *Thou savourest* not the things that be of God.
- Acts 28:22 – We desire to hear of thee what *thou thinkest*.



ALL in All: The Goal of the Universe

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)
(#6269) 219 pages, Paperback

(See order form.)

This publication is a compilation of the writings of A.E. Knoch on human destiny. The author examines three major theories on this topic current among students of Scripture. The striking phrase “All in all,” which pertains to the vivification of all mankind in I Corinthians 15:28 and relates to the reconciliation of the entire intelligent creation in Ephesians 1:23, is discussed at length. Two extensive appendices are included, exploring the usage of the terms “eon” and “eonian” in the Scriptures.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Romans 8:5 | – They that are after the flesh <i>do mind</i> the things of the flesh. | Philippians 1:7 | – It is meet for me <i>to think</i> this of you all. |
| Romans 12:3 | – Not to think of himself more highly than he ought <i>to think</i> ; but <i>to think</i> soberly [literally, not to be high-minded – <i>hyperphroneo</i>] above what one ought to be minded [<i>phroneo</i>]; but to be minded [<i>phroneo</i>] so as to be sober-minded [<i>sophroneo</i>]. | Philippians 2:2 | – That ye be <i>likeminded</i> ... being of one accord, of one <i>mind</i> [literally, the one thing <i>minding</i>]. |
| Romans 12:16 | – <i>Be of the same mind</i> one toward another. <i>Mind</i> not high things. | Philippians 2:5 | – Let this <i>mind</i> be in you. |
| Romans 14:6 | – He that <i>regardeth</i> the day, <i>regardeth</i> it unto the Lord; and he that <i>regardeth</i> not the day, to the Lord he doth not <i>regard</i> it. | Philippians 3:15 | – As many as be perfect, be thus <i>minded</i> ; and if in any thing ye be otherwise <i>minded</i> . |
| Romans 15:5 | – Grant you <i>to be</i> like <i>minded</i> one toward another. | Philippians 3:16 | – Let us <i>mind</i> the same thing. |
| I Corinthians 4:6 | – Not <i>to think</i> of men above that which is written. | Philippians 3:19 | – Who <i>mind</i> earthly things. |
| I Corinthians 13:11 | – <i>I understood</i> as a child. | Philippians 4:2 | – That they be of the same <i>mind</i> in the Lord. |
| II Corinthians 13:11 | – <i>Be of one mind</i> (literally, <i>mind</i> the same thing). | Philippians 4:10 | – Your <i>care</i> of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also <i>careful</i> . |
| Galatians 5:10 | – That <i>ye will be</i> none otherwise <i>minded</i> . | Colossians 3:2 | – <i>Set your affection</i> on things above. |

Notice how many times Paul uses the word *phroneo* in his letter to the Philippians! It must indicate something of the character of this epistle, recalling that this word indicates thoughts of feeling, of emotion, of a sensitive nature. Reading these passages in newer translations and noting the variety of ways the translators render this verb will verify the suggestions about its meaning that have been discussed here. ■



100 pp., PB

See order form.

Suffering: God's Forgotten Gift

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Two gifts given to the believer are mentioned by Paul in Philippians 1:29. The first is “to believe on Him.” This is a glorious gift. Every believer has been given this gift from God. Those who possess it may not even fully recognize it as a gift from Him, but indeed faith is God’s wonderful gift to us. Faith is a rich gift from God, but there is also another gift from God to the believer, mentioned by Paul in Philippians 1:29, that is equally as glorious. The second gift is “also to suffer for His sake.” This, too, is a glorious gift. Every believer has been given this gift from God as well, but those who possess it often do not fully recognize it for what it is. Indeed, suffering for His sake similarly is God’s wonderful gift to us. Paul teaches us to embrace this second gift as well as we do the first!

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