

Theme: As citizens of heaven who have been blessed by God, we are to walk in humility before God and each other, which leads to unity in the church.

I. Intro – I Am Third – Gayle Sayers

- A. Gayle Sayers – great running back
- B. Gayle Sayers – Brian’s Song
- C. Gayle Sayers – I Am Third - God, others, me
- D. This is like Paul’s appeal in this text
- E. How do citizens of heaven live together?

II. Basis of Appeal – Our Riches in Christ

- A. Paul lists 4 realities in Christ (v1)
 - 1. If – but assumes they are true
 - 2. Encouragement from Christ – even in suffering
 - 3. Comfort from love (of God the Father)
 - 4. Fellowship/participation with the Spirit
 - 5. 2 Corinthians 13:14//Phi 2:1
 - 6. Tenderness & compassion/mercy (from God)
- B. Strong basis for appeal
 - 1. All Christians have experienced these things

- 2. These blessings motivate us to obey

III. The Appeal: Unity

- A. An introductory basis for appeal (again!)
 - 1. Then make my joy complete (v2)
 - 2. Looks like appeal, but really another basis
- B. The appeal – stated 4 ways! (ESV)
 - 1. Being like-minded – of the **same** mind
 - 2. Having the **same** love
 - 3. In full accord – of one soul
 - 4. One in purpose – lit. **of one mind**
 - 5. φρονεω - 10 of 23 in Paul; 2:5; 4:2; 4:10
 - 6. Mind in Christ; towards Paul; each other!!!
- C. Four statements – one reality – Unity!
 - 1. All four things speak of unity
 - 2. Does not mean agree on everything
 - 3. Does speak of an attitude with each other

IV. Barriers to Unity – And the Way Forward

- A. Barriers in attitude – destroy unity

1. Selfish ambition – rivalry – also in 1:17

2. Vain conceit – proud but empty!

B. The right attitude – humility

1. This is the opposite of the other 2 attitudes

2. Humility begins before God (1 Pet 5:5-6)

3. Others as better = surpassing/more important

C. Humility in action (v4)

1. Look to others needs as well as my own

2. 2nd great commandment, golden rule in action

3. Done by “each of you” – all must do this!

V. Applying the Word

A. Do we see the great riches we have in Christ?

1. Encouragement, love, participation, mercy

2. Forgiven, adopted, blessed – no matter what!

B. Do these blessings produce humility before God & others?

1. Humility not a virtue in Western Civ. - weakness

2. Not even listed in the book of virtues!

3. Are we humble before God?

4. Has this changed our attitude before others?

5. Do I put others before myself? – I AM THIRD

C. Do we walk in unity with others?

1. Do I see the indispensable nature of local church?

2. Do I walk in humble unity – or proud disunity?

3. Stand for truth – humbly!!

D. Communion – with Christ and the church

Unity Through Humility

Philippians 2:1-4

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Communion

2 Corinthians 13:14

