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## Daily Devotional - Monday, November 5, 2018 - Maintaining Church Unity

NOVEMBER 05TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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### Philippians 2:1-2

MONDAY

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Churches all around the world experience brokenness. Christians are divided over a whole range of things, such as whether the service should be contemporary or traditional. Paul points out that unity is crucial to achieving our purpose. So how is that possible when a disagreement arises?

It all depends on what the difference of opinion is about. The fundamental tenets of the faith (for example, that Jesus is the Son of God, who died for our sins and rose again) are not negotiable. However, if the dispute has to do with a nonessential issue—such as a hair-splitting interpretation of doctrine—some prayerful discussion in love is acceptable, but believers should not let it cause division. In cases like this, a consensus is likely to leave some people disappointed with the results. Yet both sides should be willing to accept differences without strife.

Years ago, I was at a rural Southern church whose congregation was divided into obvious sides. The factions were essentially separate churches. Instead of addressing lots of fringe issues, I simply began to preach the Word. Over time, people who hadn't talked to one another in years began to unite. Why? The church is the body of Jesus Christ (Col. 1:24), so He can bring us together.

People selfishly believe their preferences are better than others' opinions, and in human strength, there's nothing we can do to mend our differences. But it pleases God when we sacrifice our desires for the greater good of a unified church. And obedience ultimately gives greater joy than getting our way.

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