

Philippians 1:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

Analysis

Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will (Τινὲς μὲν καὶ διὰ φθόνον καὶ ἔριν, τινὲς δὲ καὶ δι' εὐδοκίαν τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν, Tines men kai dia phthonon kai erin, tines de kai di' eudokian ton Christon kēryssousin)—Paul distinguishes preachers by motive, not message. Both groups **preach Christ** (τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν, ton Christon kēryssousin), but from vastly different hearts. Phthonon ("envy, jealousy") and erin ("strife, contention") are fleshly motivations; eudokian ("good will, benevolence") springs from love.

The envious preachers likely resented Paul's prominence or saw his imprisonment as an opportunity to gain influence. Yet they proclaimed authentic Christology, else Paul couldn't rejoice (v. 18). This passage distinguishes gospel content (non-negotiable) from ministerial motive (evaluable but not disqualifying). Paul's magnanimity is remarkable—he prioritizes gospel advance over personal vindication.

Historical Context

Early Christian leadership involved competition for followers and honor, seen in Corinthian factionalism (1 Cor 1:10-17). Some Roman Christians may have been jealous of Paul's apostolic status or blamed his imprisonment for bringing persecution. Ancient honor-shame culture intensified rivalry. Paul's response—

rejoicing in Christ preached despite impure motives—transcends cultural norms of revenge and reputation-defense.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when others succeed in ministry from mixed or impure motives?
2. Can you distinguish between doctrinal error (to oppose) and motivational impurity (to endure)?
3. What does Paul's magnanimity teach about prioritizing gospel impact over personal recognition?

Interlinear Text

τινὲς	μὲν	καὶ	δι'	φθόνον	καὶ	ἔριν	τινὲς	δὲ	καὶ	δι'
Some	indeed	also	of	envy	also	strife	Some	and	also	of
G5100	G3303	G2532	G1223	G5355	G2532	G2054	G5100	G1161	G2532	G1223
εὐδοκίαν τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν·										
good will										
G2107	G3588	Christ		preach						
		G5547		G2784						

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 2:3 (Parallel theme): Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

2 Corinthians 11:13 (References Christ): For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

Matthew 23:5 (Parallel theme): But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

2 Corinthians 1:19 (References Christ): For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

2 Corinthians 4:5 (References Christ): For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

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