Family Drama Pt. 2

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 10 May 2026

Preacher: Dr. Michael Staton

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Many times when it works out so perfectly that it's just kind of amazing.

This year at Easter, just a few weeks ago, was one of those examples. I'm not opposed to jumping outside of what we're studying on occasion. There's times that we do that, and many times we just stay where we are and it works out perfect.
On Easter this year, we just preached the next passage in Philippians 3 because we were in verse 10, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection.
And on Easter, I just thought how amazing that just staying where we are without changing anything was perfect for Easter because it was about the resurrection. It doesn't always work out like that.
But I didn't get as far as I intended to last Sunday. So part two of family drama on Mother's Day.
[1:30] Now you may think it actually worked out perfect and it's timely and perhaps it is, but my intention was not to deal with conflict specifically on Mother's Day, but here we are.

So just pretend that you know what it's like to have drama in your family, all right? Just pretend that you could hypothetically have a little conflict in your life.
What would you do, hypothetically of course, if you had some conflict? Well, in Philippians 4, that's where we are. We're talking about there's conflict in the church that he's writing to.
This is a faithful church. This is a good church. This is a commendable church he's writing to. But just like ours and just like every other church that exists, it is an imperfect church.
And so in Philippians 4, he deals with that reality. And we looked last week mainly at just verse 2. And we're going to look in verses 3 and 4 today.
[2:34] Let's read it again. Philippians 4, verse 2. I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow elders, fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

And so we looked last week at this reality that there is conflict that happens in the church. There's conflict in our homes. There's conflict in the church.
That's just real life. And so you've got on your sermon insert the reminder of the two points we looked at last week. Number one, Christian brothers and sisters are your true family.
And that speaks to our relationships. Christian brothers and sisters. This is our truest family. He says in verse 1, You are my joy and my crown.
You're my beloved. And so even in the context of the reality of conflict, first, verse 1, he mentions that there are relationships that are a part of our life, our brothers and sisters in Christ, and these are such a gift from the Lord.
[3:57] And you see in verse 1, his love for his brothers and sisters. You're my brothers. I love you. I long for you. You're my joy. You're my crown. You're my beloved.

And we are aware that one of God's great gifts to us are the brothers and sisters in our spiritual family. But the second point we looked at from verse 2 was that like our earthly family, sometimes brothers and sisters in Christ have conflict.
Just like in your home, you love your spouse and you love your kids and you love your parents, you love your siblings. Sometimes within the confines of the family there, conflict takes place.
Well, the same thing is true in the church. Our brothers and sisters in Christ are our true family. That's our relationships. But like our earthly family, sometimes brothers and sisters in Christ have conflict.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

And our word for that was last week, reality. That's just the reality of life. There's no perfect people in our church. And because of that, there's no perfect churches.
[5:09] And so your family can love each other and care for each other deeply, but sometimes there's going to be conflict. You can love your church and love Christ and be very committed to the Lord and very committed to those in the church, but the reality is sometimes there's going to be conflict.

The question is not, will there be conflict? The question is, what will we do when there is? And we've got a lot of young families in our church, a lot of people who are newly married with little kids, and we're so excited for those families.
And I want to tell you, if it's God's will for you to be married, it's a wonderful thing, and we celebrate if that's the Lord's will for you. But as great as marriage is, there's going to be conflict.
It's just reality. As great as it is to raise kids, if that's God's will for you in your life, there's going to be conflict. And it's certainly good to be a part of a church and to belong to a local assembly that's doing great commission work together, but if you are a part of a church, there's going to be conflict. That's just the reality of it. So, our Christian brothers and sisters are our true family, but like your earthly family, sometimes brothers and sisters in Christ have conflict.
[6:41] Let's move forward to point three today. When that happens, we are to seek unity. When that happens, we are to seek unity.

And you're going to put beside that the word resolution. We want to look for resolution to conflict. So, let's just look at these three points here. Christian brothers and sisters are your true family, but like your earthly family, sometimes brothers and sisters in Christ have conflict.
And when that happens, we are to seek unity. So, let's look at this third point this morning here, that what it means to seek for resolution. So, in verse 2, as we looked at last Sunday, we've got specifically two ladies, Euodia and Syntyche, and they're having a hard time getting along with each other.
Now, these are ladies who are working. They're not lazy. They're not troublemakers. They're actively working and serving. It's not probably that one of them has a doctrinal error, because I think Paul would have corrected that if that was the case.
I don't think it's the case that one of them only is at fault, because if that was the case, I think he would have mentioned who was at fault. It seems to be in context that you've got two ladies who are real believers, who are really working and doing ministry work, and the problem doesn't seem to be doctrinal.
[8:10] The problem seems to be just between two people who, as they do the work of the Lord, for whatever reason unknown to us, they just have a hard time getting along with each other.

This is real life. And while we do want to look to the Bible to find resolution, I don't want you to be scared off just by the presence of conflict.
Conflict is inevitable. We looked last week at some tips for conflict in ministry, and one of the things we looked at is that conflict is inevitable, but combat is optional.
Be decisiveness on conflict is intentional. If you get married, you're going to have conflict. If you have kids, you're going to have conflict. If you have a friend, you're going to have conflict.
If you go to college and have a roommate, you're going to have conflict. Can I get an amen from our college students here? You're going to have conflict. That's just the way life is. And when it happens, we seek unity.
[9:17] So what does Paul say? We've got these two ladies, Euodia and Syntyche, believers working, striving, serving, but in conflict.

What do we do? Verse 3, Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women who have labored side by side with me in the gospel.
So what Paul says that we're to do when conflict is in the church, he says, I ask you, true companion, to help them. Now this is really an interesting thing.
We don't know for sure who he's referencing when he says true companion. Some think it's just a reference to anybody in the church who happens to know these ladies, that it could be a reference to just a group in general.
Some believe this to be actually a specific person by name. The word translated here as companion or yoke fellow can be a proper name.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

[10:27] And so it could be that this person's name means companion. And so he's calling on someone whose name means companion and says, I'm asking you, true companion, be exactly what your name means and help these ladies.

I do think the best way to see this probably is as a reference to a specific person. And while we don't know for sure who that person is, it's clear the Philippian church knows who that person is because that's who the letter is written to.
I ask you, true companion, to help these women. Which means, this is clear for us, that conflict is not to be ignored.
It is to be solved. Whether in the church, in a marriage, in the office, among friends, friends, conflict is not to be ignored.
Can we just do a little interactive story? I'm just curious. There's not a right or wrong here, but would you do me the favor of engaging and participating in a quick vote for me here?
[11:43] I'm just curious. If your two choices are there's conflict, if your preference would be, your preference would be to ignore it, or your preference would be to deal with it immediately, head on.

Those are your two choices. You've got conflict with somebody. Are you the kind of person that would prefer to ignore it? Are you the kind of person that says, let's deal with this immediately?
We're going to vote. Raise your hand. If your preference, just your personal way that you are, the way that you're kind of wired, you would prefer to ignore conflict. Raise your hand if you're in ignore conflict.
How many of you would say, no, I'd rather deal with it head on. I may not like it, but I want to deal with it right now. Look around the room. It's about 50-50.
Now what would be really fun is if two people in the second group married each other. We could just sit back and watch the sparks fly. Understand this, that whichever way you're wired, it is important to make sure that we're striving to do things according to the Bible.
[12:57] And you may be someone that's more patient and wants more time. That's fine. You may be someone who likes to deal with it more quickly. That's fine. Just make sure that you don't run over somebody and say, hey, that's just me.

And make sure that you don't let conflict fester without trying to solve it and just say, hey, that's just the way I am. Let's make sure we're doing the best we can to be biblical.
And understand, the person you're having conflict with, they may be on the other side of that vote. And if they're on the other side of that vote, that can be hard.
But, if you're on the same side of that vote, that can be really a challenge too. So what do we do? Well, let's just heed the words of verse 3.
You Odeon Syntyche can't get along, so he reaches out to this individual referred to as true companion and says, help them. Paul says that conflict in the church ought to be dealt with with other people loving the Lord and loving the people enough to get involved to help them solve it.
[14:17] Now, I don't know about you, but if I am the true companion, I think my first thought is, thanks a lot, Paul.

I mean, Iodia's here and Syntyche's here and they're fighting with each other and as the old saying goes, sometimes the hardest hit falls on the one who steps in between because now you get hit by both sides.
But Paul says to the true companion here, for the sake of the gospel, help them. love them enough to help them.
Love Christ enough to help resolve the conflict. Love the church enough to try to resolve the conflict. And we may be tempted to say, well, what's wrong with these ladies?
They don't even know the Lord, but that's not the case as we looked at last week. He says, I ask you to help these women. These are faithful ladies who have labored side by side with me together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are in the book of life.
[15:40] The New Testament tells us that the way that we solve conflict as Christians is not by gossip, not by slander, not by ignoring it, but by having faithful people who love Christ and love you enough to try to resolve it.

This is what Galatians 6.1 says, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.
And let's be honest, it would be easier to just say, look, I have enough trouble of my own, and I'll let them worry about themselves. That would be easier. But for the sake of the gospel, for the sake of

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

unity in the church, let's be peacemakers.
if there's someone in your Sunday school class, someone in your ministry, someone that you're friends with, someone that you work with in ministry, and there's just conflict that will not go away, love them enough, love the church enough, love Christ enough to seek resolution with them.
And you say, well, what business is it of mine to step in? Well, that's what the Bible says we do. Galatians 6 and Philippians 4 both appeal to someone to get involved in the situation with the right heart, with the right purpose, with the right motive to seek resolution for the sake of the gospel.
[17:24] And I want you to notice that when he mentions these people, Iodia, Syntyche, True Companion, Clement, all these people mentioned, he says, he says, they're the rest of my fellow workers.

These are people doing ministry. So let's just be clear with this. That sometimes people who are really working hard for the gospel still will have conflict.
Don't be scared off by that. We don't want to make light of it. We don't want to tolerate it in the sense that we ignore it or that we treat it as no big deal.
But at the same time, don't be scared off by the reality of conflict. Next week, Mars and I will celebrate 30 years of being married and by God's grace, it's been an exceedingly joyful 30 years. But it's not perfect. We don't claim it to be perfect. It's good. We're grateful. We love living life together, but it's not perfect. But we're not afraid of conflict.
[18:37] We recognize that you've got two sinners that lived together for 30 years. You're going to have to work through some things. We don't need to be afraid because things are imperfect. And that's true for you in your job, and that's true for you in your ministry you serve in.

That's true for you as a member of the church. It ought to be joyful. It ought to be good. You ought to feel blessed by it. But it's going to be imperfect. Don't be afraid of that. These are all people in Philippians 4 who are working.
If you're going to work, if you're going to really be a part of helping us do great commission work here, and I hope that you will, there's going to be some people that you just struggle getting along with.
And sometimes people look at this text and say, well, these must be deep down unbelievers. That's why they're fighting. That's not why they're fighting.
It's not that they're unconverted. In fact, verse 3 makes it crystal clear. These are the rest of my fellow workers whose names are in the book of life. The New Testament tells us about the book of life.
[19:46] it's where the names of the redeemed are kept. In fact, just listen to a couple of different verses that reference the book of life here.

Revelation 3, 5. The one who conquers will be clothed in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my father and before his angels.
Revelation 21, 27. But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.
It's the ones who go to heaven. Revelation 13, 7 and 8, speaking about the Antichrist. Authority was given over to tribes and people and language and nation and all who dwell on the earth will worship it.
Everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. When is the name of someone put in the Lamb's book of life according to Revelation 13?
[20:53] From the foundation of the world. You are secure. You are safe. But it doesn't mean your life will be free of conflict.

According to Revelation 13, Christians' names are put in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. You could not be more safe and secure than that.
But, even among those who are truly children of God, who have truly been born again and truly redeemed, even among them, there will be conflict.
conflict. And so, let's not be afraid of that. Let's not be shocked by that. Let's do love each other enough to labor toward resolution.
If you find yourself today with someone in the church that you just can't get along with, for the sake of the gospel, seek resolution.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

[22:10] For the glory of Christ, for the sake of the name of the one who has redeemed us, seek resolution. And don't think that just because there's conflict that you need to run away.

That's not the case. And don't think that if you always try to do the right thing, that you'll never have conflict because you're flawed and the people you're serving with are flawed, and you odia and syntyche, whatever else is true of them, these are real believers who are doing the work of ministry, and yet, in the midst of their labor with gospel work, conflict arises.
So, when you have conflict in your church, or when you have conflict in your home, love each other enough and love Christ enough to seek resolution.
In this brief passage we've looked at these last two weeks, there are three imperatives. Note them. Chapter 4, verse 1, stand firm.
in the Lord. That's the first imperative. The second is in verse 2, agree in the Lord. And the third is in verse 3, help these women.
[23:40] Stand, agree, and help. This is a great way for you to think about how to handle conflict, whether you're the one in the middle of it, or maybe you're the peacemaker trying to bring two parties together to seek resolution.

Stand, agree, and help. Stand strong in the things of God. Stand up for what is right. Agree to do things according to God's Word, and then with grace, help those who are in need.
Stand, agree, and help. Stand up for truth. Agree to honor the Lord, and help those who are struggling.
I might just emphasize here that last one, to help. You've got people in your family, people in your church, people in your ministry, and there's conflict around, help them.
Don't gossip, don't slander, don't mock, help them.
[25:01] Ministry can be messy sometimes, we understand that. Relationships can be complicated sometimes, we know that. but for the sake of the gospel, stand, agree, and help.

I want to give you some helpful suggestions here for dealing with conflict among Christians. We looked last week specifically when there's conflict in ministry.
Let me just give you a few helpful suggestions for dealing with conflict among Christians. All under the heading here of stand, agree, and help.
Stand up for what's right, agree to honor the Lord, and help those who are in conflict. Number one, whether it's conflict you're in, or the conflict of other people you're trying to help, number one, don't ever let the imperfections of people be an excuse for your lack of faithfulness.
Don't let the imperfections of people be an excuse for your lack of faithfulness. Romans 12, 17 says, repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.
[26:35] people. So maybe somebody really has hurt you. Maybe they really have wronged you. I'm just saying, don't let their disobedience become a reason for you to be disobedient in return.

But can we admit this is really hard? hard. This is really hard. Because when someone has hurt you deeply, especially when you have no reason to understand why they've done it, every part of your being feels so wronged.
But don't let their disobedience become your standard of living.
Keep doing the right thing. It can be so tempting to want to return evil for evil, evil.
But we have a higher standard. Number two, don't think ignoring problems will make them go away.
Don't think ignoring problems will make them go away.
[28:06] If you're involved in a lasting, ongoing conflict, don't ignore that. the way that I treat problems with our house or vehicle is I try to ignore them and hope it will heal itself.

That does not work very well. It worked once. Had a ceiling fan that was messed up and he decided it's going to heal itself and actually did. The problem is that worked once.
Five thousand other times it hasn't worked. Things don't usually get better on their own. Now let's be clear about something. If it's just a small annoyance, someone just kind of got on your nerves today, don't make a big deal about that.
Don't make a big production just because somebody did one thing, said one thing. Forgive and move on. But if it is a Philippians 4 kind of deal where there's two people, you're one of them, and you just can't seem to mesh with this person, don't ignore it.
Those things don't seem to get better. They don't heal themselves. Number three, be willing to bear burdens of others for the sake of the gospel.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

[29:33] Be willing to bear burdens of others for the sake of the gospel. You say, well, I'm just going to leave the church. I'm just going to quit this ministry.

I'm just going to never talk to them again. I'm just going to ignore them for the rest of the time I'm here. I'm just going to start staying home.
I'm just going to sit on the sidelines. Well, for the sake of the gospel, let's not do that. Because we don't see grace lived out and mercy lived out and forgiveness lived out.
For the sake of the gospel, be willing to do what's right. And for the sake of the gospel, be willing to get involved to help somebody else. And you say, well, I don't want to get in the middle of it.
It's too messy. Ministry is messy. I agree with that. But for the sake of the gospel, for the sake of the name of Christ, be willing to bear burdens of other people.
[30:38] And again, our exact biblical example of this is Philippians 4 verse 3 where he asked true companion to get involved in this.

And true companions over here thinking, hey, my life's fine. I don't want to get involved with Iodi and Syntyche. They may team up and come against me, and they may.
But for the sake of the gospel, bear burdens and seek peace. Number four, understand that all ministry and all relationships will be challenging at times.
All ministry, all relationships will be challenging at times. If you have a job, there's going to be conflict.
If you have friends, there's going to be conflict. If you're in a church, there's going to be conflict. So I'll tell you what some people do. The older they get, they retreat away.
[31:49] They stop getting involved in ministry, less mess. They stop making friends, less mess. They stop even talking to people, less people disagree with them.

They stop serving and helping people, less headaches, and they retreat, retreat, retreat, retreat, until their life is lived all alone.
But the older we get sometimes, that doesn't sound so bad. Like some of you hear that today and say, yeah, that's what I do, and I like it that way. I know, but here's the problem. problem. That's not how the New Testament calls Christians in the church to live.
I understand that it can be simpler to have no relationships and no friends and no ministry, but that's not how the Lord's called His people to live.
And so we have to choose. will we do what is simple and convenient or will we be faithful? Number five, you can only do your part, but be sure to do your part.
[33:12] You can only do your part, but be sure to do your part. Romans 12, 18, if possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. you can only do your part.

Some of you have relationships that are broken. You can only do your part. Just be sure to do your part.
And particularly on Mother's Day, I know for some you feel this really personally, through the headaches and the frustrations of relationships that are strained or broken.
Remember the context in which we find these words of conflict. Chapter 3 ended, verse 20, our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a way to save the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself.
It won't always be like this. It won't always be like this. things. It hurts to have strained relationships in the church.
[34:46] It hurts to have strained relationships in your family. It hurts to have a parent or a spouse or a child and there's relationships that are really, really hard.

it won't always be like this. One day sin is going to be done away with and everything becomes new and we'll enjoy the presence of the redeemed with the Lord in perfection.
It won't always be this hard. but until that day, be patient, be forgiving, be reasonable, and as you do, do what verse 4 says, right coming out of the conflict.
Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice. Lord, we thank you for your word today and pray that you would use it to protect the peace and bring peace to families, to people, and may our church continue to be a place where we walk in unity.
How good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity. May that be true of our church and of our homes. In Christ's name, Amen. Amen.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host