

PRAGMATIC, PRAGMATICALLY, PRAGMATISM

Paul didn't teach **pragmatism** or compromise. Instead he taught strict separation from the world, and he forbade the church from forming alliances the world.

- **2 Corinthians 6:14:** "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

Paul didn't want the church to achieve unity through compromise or **pragmatism**. Instead he wanted them to unify in the truth of the gospel, and to be unified because they were of one mind about it.

- **Philippians 1:27:** "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;"

Paul didn't desire a unity that was based on **pragmatism** or the lowest common denominator. Instead he sought unity that was based on everyone having the same mind.

- **Philippians 2:2:** "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

Christians must avoid having disputes with one another. The way to do this is to all be of one mind (not through

compromise or **pragmatism**).

- **Philippians 2:2, 14:** "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. ... Do all things without murmurings and disputings."

The way disagreements in the churches should be resolved is by being of the same mind in the Lord. They shouldn't be resolved through compromise or **pragmatism**, or by disregarding doctrine or ignoring the Scriptures.

- **Philippians 4:2:** "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord."

Paul wasn't satisfied with a church that got the basics right, but which neglected everything else in the name of **pragmatism**. Instead he commanded churches to seek to be perfect in all things, and to neglect nothing.

- **Colossians 4:12:** "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."

The church must defend the doctrines of the Scriptures and hold on to them. The church isn't allowed to cast them away in the name of **pragmatism** or appealing to the world.

- **2 Thessalonians 2:15:** "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."

The Bible teaches strict separation. It forbids becoming yoked with evil and doesn't allow **pragmatism**.

- **2 Thessalonians 3:6:** "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

The apostles taught strict separation from everyone who rejected their doctrines or continued to live in sin. They didn't allow compromise and rejected **pragmatism**.

- **2 Thessalonians 3:14:** "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."

Paul never said that doctrine could be sidelined for **pragmatic** reasons if it would help the church grow. Instead he repeatedly emphasized the importance of doctrine, and never allowed any compromises to be made.

- **1 Timothy 5:17:** "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."

Paul condemned the idea that gain is godliness. He taught that it was wrong to reject the Scriptures to obtain some sort of gain. This means Paul was against **pragmatism**.

- **1 Timothy 6:5:** "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."

The gain that comes from **pragmatism** and compromise is worthless. True gain comes from godliness with contentment.

- **1 Timothy 6:5-6:** "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain."

Paul didn't tell Christians to compromise, or to pursue **pragmatism** to increase the size of their congregations. Instead he commanded people to fight the good fight of faith, and to remain faithful to the doctrines and commandments of the Scriptures.

- **1 Timothy 6:12:** "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

Paul hated compromise and **pragmatism**. He earnestly desired for Timothy to be faithful.

- **1 Timothy 6:20:** "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:"

Paul didn't attack doctrine or condemn it as foolish or divisive. He didn't urge **pragmatism** or tell people to find the lowest common denominator. Instead he commanded everyone to acknowledge the truth, because that leads to godliness.

- **Titus 1:1:** "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness,"

Paul didn't say that if no one met the qualifications for a deacon, it was fine to relax them in the name of **pragmatism**. Instead he taught that elders *must* meet *all* of these qualifications.

- **Titus 1:5-6:** "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly."

Paul didn't **pragmatically** encourage church leaders to compromise whenever possible to maximize church attendance. Instead he commanded that those who rejected the doctrines of God were to be rebuked sharply.

- **Titus 1:13:** "This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;"

Paul didn't command Titus to find the lowest common denominator, or look for common ground, or compromise in the name of **pragmatism**. Instead Titus was to proclaim the doctrines of the Bible.

- **Titus 2:1:** "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:"

Paul didn't allow any corruption to doctrine. He didn't permit doctrines to be ignored or changed in the name of **pragmatism** or trying to reach a larger audience.

- **Titus 2:7:** "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good

works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,"

Paul didn't take the **pragmatic** approach that "it's for the sake of the gospel, so that justifies whatever I need to do". Instead he was careful to do what was right. (For example, although Paul would have benefited from the help of Onesimus, he still took the time to write to Philemon and get his permission first. He didn't just take Onesimus on the grounds that the ends justifies the means.)

- **Philemon 1:13-14:** "Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel: But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly."

The apostle John wanted the grace, mercy, and peace of the church to be grounded in truth and love, not in sin or **pragmatism** or compromise.

- **2 John 1:3:** "Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love."

John wanted the church to walk in the truth, not in **pragmatism** or compromise or a love for this world.

- **2 John 1:4:** "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father."