

people ordained to church office are working together, the potential for envy and selfish ambition is increased. Such people usually have deep conviction on minor points of doctrine as well as the major verities. There is bound to be some disagreement from time to time on either a point of doctrine or practice. If earthly wisdom prevails then "disorder and every evil practice" will not only tear the team to shreds but will inevitably affect the church as well. Since this is the result that the Devil would certainly desire, it is not surprising that such wisdom is termed, "devilish" by James.

"It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry," (Phil. 1:15a) exclaims the imprisoned Apostle. It hardly seems possible that these words (*φθόνον καὶ ἐρίν*) that are used to describe the lost, the unwise, and the materialistic are here used to describe proclaimers of the true Gospel. There is no evidence that their message was faulty. Paul speaks of them as those who "preach Christ" and he rejoices in the fact that their message is being heard. (vv. 15, 17, 18) The problem centered in their attitude and their motivation. As Jac Muller comments:

The point in question here is that of a personal antithesis or antipathy, an attitude which was pro-Christ but anti-Paul. It is possible that to a great measure it was a 'question of prestige' that brought a section of the Christians at Rome in opposition to Paul. ²³

How true it is that those who command the admiration of the Christian public are often the targets for malicious words and deeds

²³Jac J. Muller, The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1955), p. 53.