



Pragmatists and Purists

How Idealists and Realists Can Build the Kingdom Together

Strong and effective kingdom men (and women) **carry different gifts, callings, roles, and perspectives**. When these are yielded to the Holy Spirit, they can work in harmony—bringing about true unity in the Spirit through the bond of peace rather than discord and division (literally, di-vision—two visions).

Understanding the tension between Purists and Pragmatists helps us **navigate our differences without fragmenting our fellowship**. These aren't opposing sides—they're differing instincts, both vital when rightly surrendered to Christ.

A Continuum, Not a Category

- Most of us lean one way or the other, but we may shift depending on context or calling. Seeing these perspectives as a **range of tendencies**—not a strict label—helps us walk in grace with one another.

Strengths and Pitfalls

Purists (Idealists) keep us grounded in timeless truth—values, principles, and Scripture. But they may:

- Be dogmatic, legalistic, or rigid
- Be resistant to incremental progress
- Develop an all or nothing attitude that can impede incremental gains

Even **Paul—the ultimate Purist**—wrote:

"Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters..."
(Romans 14:1, Philippians 1:18)

Pragmatists (Realists) help build bridges, advance the mission, and make practical choices to reach the goal. They reach across divides, bring opposing views together for a common goal. But they may:

- Be so willing to accept all sides, that it compromises core doctrine or values.
- Be subject to accepting things that lead to watering down the Gospel and jeopardizing the core mission.
- Accept not just people but their unacceptable actions.

The Bible warns of people falling away, accepting unsound doctrines, and leaders itching the ears of people rather than holding to pure truth.



"Preach the word... for the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine... they will gather teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear." (2 Tim. 4:2-3)

Comparison Table: Purists and Pragmatists

	Purists	Pragmatists
Core Question	What is right?	What is effective?
Primary Concern	Integrity and alignment	Outcomes and progress
View of Compromise	Dangerous concession	Necessary tool
Biggest Fear	Diluted conviction	Wasted opportunity
Strengths	Principled, unwavering, consistent	Strategic, adaptive, resourceful
Weaknesses	May sabotage progress for the sake of perfection	May sacrifice long-term values for short-term results
Metaphor	They're the architects building a bridge across a chasm	They're the watchmen making sure we don't build with flawed stone

Walking in Unity

When these temperaments are submitted to the Holy Spirit, **Purists refine the vision, and Pragmatists help fulfill it.** We need both.

"Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed." (Psalm 85:10)

Let us walk in truth with mercy, build with integrity and grace, and remember: We don't have to think exactly alike to fight for the same cause. Let's **locks arms—not horns.**

