

CONDUCT WORTHY OF THE GOSPEL

A Solemn Exhortation

Philippians 1:27-30

Paul had a special *love, respect, and appreciation* for the **Church at Philippi**. It was one of the *most mature* of the churches described in the New Testament. Nevertheless, as with every church, it had *issues and problems* that it had to deal with...some of them *potentially serious*.

- They had to deal with *selfishness, rivalry, and personal ambitions* (**Philippians 2:3-4**).
- They needed to be on guard against *false teachers and legalism* (**Philippians 3:1-4**).
- They needed to repudiate those in the congregation who were “enemies of the cross of Christ” (**Philippians 3:18**).
- There was a conflict between two individuals within the church which needed to be addressed (**Philippians 4:2**).

Paul knew that it *doesn't take long* when our *enemy the devil* invades, for even a *faithful and mature church* to slip into *indifference*...and eventually into *moral and doctrinal error* (i.e. **The Church at Ephesus**). His love for the church at **Philippi** led him to help them *address* these *issues*.

In this passage, **Paul** gives a *solemn exhortation* to the *church* to maintain their *spiritual commitment*...to continue to *behave in a way* that is *consistent* with the *power of the Gospel*. He calls on them to *conduct themselves* in a way that shows that they have *spiritual maturity* and *integrity*.

I. SHOW FAITHFULNESS: (vs. 27a)

Paul had the believers in **Philippi** on his heart. He wanted them to *honor* and *glorify* Christ.

Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ (vs. 27a)...

Only...Gk. *monon*, is placed at the beginning of the sentence for emphasis...to *emphasizes* what their *primary motive* should be.

Above all, **Paul** wanted their *lives* to *reflect worthily* on the **gospel of Christ**. This is a truth that **Paul implicitly repeats** throughout his letter.

“So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.”

~Philippians 2:12-16

Conduct yourselves...Gk. *politeuomai*, is a *political word* and carries the basic meaning of *being a citizen* or *live as citizens*. It's the *main verb* in **verses 27-30**, which in the *Greek* is a *single sentence*. It comes from the root word for *city*...which in earlier times usually referred to the *city/state* to which *inhabitants* gave their *primary allegiance*.

Philippi had the distinction of being a *Roman colony* (**Acts 16:12**)...which gave its inhabitants many of the same *rights, privileges, and status* enjoyed by *citizens of Rome* itself. Such *colonies* considered themselves “*little Romes*” and took great pride in that association. In response, they gave *complete allegiance* to **Rome** and to the *emperor*. They *adapted Roman dress* and *Roman names*...and they spoke *Latin*...the official language of **Rome**.

A responsible *citizen* was careful to not do anything that would bring *disrespect* or *disgrace* on his *citizenship*. He would try to always be considered an *honorable citizen*, so that he would never have to worry about being removed from the *list of citizens*.

In a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ...So Paul challenged them to *live as faithful citizens of heaven*. If the *citizens* of **Philippi were so *devoted* to the *honor* of their *earthly human kingdom*...how much more should *believers* be *devoted* to their *heavenly kingdom of Christ*.**

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ”

~Philippians 3:20

The *church*, though *imperfect* and *temporal*, is the *earthly manifestation* of the *perfect* and *eternal kingdom* of *heaven* that awaits us. In other words...we are to live a life *consistent* with God’s *revealed Word*...we are to live with *integrity* in *every facet of life*. We are to **conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ**.

“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

~Ephesians 4:1-3

The **gospel of Christ**...is the *good news* of *salvation* through Jesus Christ.

“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures”

~I Corinthians 15:3-4

II. STAND FIRM: (vs. 27b)

So that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit (vs. 27b)...

Stand firm...Gk. *steko*, refers to *steadfastly holding one’s ground regardless of danger or opposition*. The word was used of a *soldier* who *defended his position at all costs*... even to the point of *sacrificing his life*.

Paul makes a *similar exhortation* later in his letter.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.”

~Philippians 4:1

Also, in *other letters* he *admonished believers* to...

“Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.”

~I Corinthians 16:13

In one spirit...Paul is *exhorting* the church to be *unified* in their *hearts*...to have a *unified belief* based on *mutual convictions*...knowing that this would result in their *oneness* in *purpose*, *ministry*, and *everyday activity*.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.”

~I Corinthians 15:58

III. STRIVE TOGETHER: (vs. 27c-28)

With one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel (vs. 27c)...

One mind...Gk. *psuche*, refers to the *practice of unity*, *harmony*, and *interdependence*. It described the *early church*.

“And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart...”

~Acts 2:44-46

“And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them.”

~Acts 4:32

Paul desired to see a *functioning unity* in the church.

Striving together...Gk. *sunathleo*, a compound word that *describes an athletic contest...the need for team work*. It's a picture of *synchronized swimming*. It implies the need for *the church to come together as a team to advance the truth of God...the Gospel*. The *body of Christ...one body*.

On more than one occasion has an *athletic team* that has more *talent* failed to *win a championship* because they had players *more concerned with their own individual success than the team's*. A *less talented* team can often *win* against one that is *more talented* because they *work efficiently together* to achieve a *common objective*.

Paul uses it here to emphasize the attitude of *not taking advantage of someone else...or using someone else for their own benefit...but rather of sacrificing one's own welfare to promote the welfare of others*.

In no way alarmed by your opponents—which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God (**vs. 28**)...

Alarmed...Gk. *pturo*, refers to *serious concerns* or *being startled*. It doesn't mean *terrified* or *afraid*. It describes a *horse* that gets *spooked*...for no apparent reason.

Paul wanted the **Philippians** to *live courageously* for Christ in the midst of *opposition* and *persecution*. True, they would be *opposed*...but this *shouldn't frighten them* in any way. Instead, they were to be *reminded* at such times that their own *victorious Christian response* would be a *sign* that those who *oppose* them would eventually face *judgment* and *destruction*. As the same time, it would be a *sign* that the *saints of God* would be *delivered* by God Himself. This *assurance* would no doubt be the **Holy Spirit** at *work in their hearts*.

Similarly, Paul *encouraged* the *faithful Thessalonians*...

“Therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure. This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering. For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”

~II Thessalonians 1:4-8

Sign...Gk. *endeixis*, refers to *proving or giving evidence that something is true*.

Destruction...refers to *eternal punishment...not annihilation*. It's that *everlasting suffering in hell* described here in **II Thessalonians 1:4-8**.

The Lord Jesus Christ referred to this **destruction in hell** as *everlasting fire* and *torment* ([Matthew 25](#)).

The *second thing* this **sign** gives is *evidence* of **salvation** for those who *suffer hostility* from the **opponents** of the *Gospel*. *Persecution* for the sake of Christ is *proof* that believers *belong to Him*.

Persecution tends to be *discouraging* to *believers*. What it should be is a *source of confidence* and *joy* because *it shows* they are *saved*.

As the church struggles to *fulfill its divine mission*, it must never be *intimidated*...either by *unbelieving opponents* or by *critics from within the church*.

IV. SUFFER FOR CHRIST'S SAKE: ([vs. 29-30](#))

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake ([vs. 29](#))...

So that *opposition* wouldn't come as a *surprise*, Paul gave them a *reminder*. Both *believing in Christ*...and *suffering for Him*...had been **granted** to them...for Christ's sake.

“For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps...”

~I Peter 2:20-21

“Keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame. For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.”

~I Peter 3:16-17

Suffering for Christ wasn't to be considered an *accident* or *divine punishment* ([Job](#)). Paul referred to it as a kind of *suffering* that was really a *sign* of God's *favor*.

Granted...Gk. *echaristhe*, is derived from a word which means *grace* or *favor*. *Believing on Christ* and *suffering for Him* are both associated with God's *sovereign grace*.

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.”

~I Peter 4:12-16

Suffer for His sake...[II Timothy 3:12](#); [Matthew 10:22, 24-28, 38-39](#); [John 16:2-3](#); [Mark 8:34-36](#); [Acts 5:41](#); [I Peter 1:6-8](#); [I Peter 5:10](#)...“Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

Experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me ([vs. 30](#))...

Knowing that they were now **experiencing the same conflict** (*suffering*) that he *had been through*...and what he was *presently going through*...he wanted to *encourage them* just as they had *encouraged him*.

They had wanted to know how he fared in **Rome**. He told them, so that they could also be encouraged as they faced **conflict, suffering, and hardships**.

LESSONS WE CAN LEARN:

- It's a mandate of the church to **STAND**, to **SHARE**, to **STRIVE**, and to **SUFFER** for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ...for the sake of the Gospel.
- The believer's salvation is **SECURE**, because salvation, including grace and faith, is a **GIFT** from God. Regardless of any suffering or opposition that may come...don't let it rob you of the joy of your salvation.
- The believer's **CITIZENSHIP** is in heaven. We need to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of being God's **AMBASSADOR**.

PHILIPPIANS 1:27-30

27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; 28 in no way alarmed by your opponents—which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God. 29 For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.