

Living Life Worthy of the Gospel – Philippians 1:27-30

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I. Intro:

God is calling the church to a conduct that is rooted far deeper than man's expectations, but is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ. It's rooted in a real change that took place in our hearts, when we believed on Jesus Christ. We were given completely new natures out of which God expects to flow behavior that is worthy of the gospel. This passage will tell us what it means to live worthy of the gospel and give us three ways that God would have us live worthy of the gospel.

II. Body:

A. Thesis/Main Idea: Behave as citizens worthy of the gospel of Christ. (One sentence in the Greek)

1. Only (monon) – This word is used to switch gears and focus on the key point that Paul is trying to get across to the Philippians. This is their exhortation and it is ours as well.
2. Issue: Because of Paul's absence, people's behavior may have started to slack off. As if their behavior was previously being regulated by Paul's presence.
3. **Citizenship** (*politeuomai*) – belong to a kingdom. There are expectations on citizens to conduct themselves in such a way to benefit his/her state or kingdom. This is to apply to our heavenly citizenship as well.
4. So what does it mean to live worthy of the gospel? Worthy (*axios*) – Suitable, appropriate, deserving, value, consistency. (See also Ephesians 4:1-2, Colossians 1:10, 1 Thess 2:12)
5. Let's consider two senses of worthy
 - a. Value – Essentially the point is that someone or something is worthy to the extent that their actual value is commensurate with what the implied or assigned value is.
 - b. Consistency (Integrity) – We are worthy to the extent that we live lives that are consistent with what the Gospel values. The gospel is that sin and disobedience has been dealt a deadly blow and that they no longer have power over us to enslave us. So we are called to live a life that is consistent with the gospel that we believe and proclaim.

B. Three Ways in which our lives are reflected as worthy of the gospel.

1. Standing Firm (Steko)
 - a. We are firstly called to stand firm, to remain standing, to hold our position, to persevere.
 - b. Implies Opposition – Standing against and standing for – Persistence.
 - c. When opposition comes, when temptation comes, when obstacles appear, we who are conducting ourselves as citizens of heaven worthy of the gospel should stand firm, and not lay down, succumb or give up.
 - d. **One spirit and one mind (soul).**
 1. Unity is very important to God. **See: John 17:21-23**, Jesus prays for unity.
 - a. Unity is crucial to our witness of the glory and magnificence of God (**This is why Paul focuses in on this in beginning of this passage with only.**) Because what he is telling us here with living a life worthy of the gospel is at the core of our reason for existing, namely the glorification of God (or also worship) ascribing to God the splendor due his name.
 - b. Our disunity, is not only not worthy of the gospel, but does in fact do damage to the gospel in the eyes of those who see it.
2. Striving together (Sunathleo)
 - a. We're not just called to Stand and be united and that's it. But rather we stand firm, united for a purpose.

b. Greek word is Sunaltheo – roots of sun and athleo, meaning “with striving”. Where we get the word athlete and athletics.

c. Athletic team analogy (We’re not lone rangers).

1. Athletic team consists of multiple persons. Baseball team as an example. They must stand firm united, meaning they must continue to play the game united with each other in understanding of what their common goal is, namely to strive together for the purposes of winning games in order to ultimately have a shot at winning the World Series. The baseball team must also be fearless so that they are able to confidently face their opposition. Christians must likewise emulate these qualities.

d. Mission - This passage is extremely missional. Mission is the natural emanation of a heart that’s enamored with the glory of God.

1. To the extent that we worship and delight in God, is the extent to which we will sacrifice our selfish worldly desires for the sake of sharing the deep knowledge and love of God with others.

3. Fearless **READ: Verse 28.** How can we be fearless?

1. **Read Philippians 1:20-21.** Only when Christ is our life can we be fearless and courageous.
2. When Christ is our life, then we have a deep love of God and consequently of others. This love compels us risk even our lives for the sake of loving God and others. (**Read 1 John 4:17-20**)

b. And so in standing firm united, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and being fearless, Paul calls us to behave worthy of the gospel. Paul is not just calling us to a nice-to-do, or an optional thing. But rather what he is exhorting us to is the heart of the gospel. **Why?**

1. Integrity – greatest testimony before the world, particularly our love for one another.
2. John 13:35 “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”
3. Unbelief is the root of our misguided behavior. We don’t believe because we’ve been deceived into believing that something or someone else other than God can satisfy us. And consequently, true love dissipates, because now God and other people threaten to stand in the way of what we have been deceived into thinking will bring us satisfaction and contentment. Division increases, and we fail to proclaim the good news of Christ crucified and risen from the dead, because we now fear what others will think of us, as we have lifted up comfort and the praise of man as the idols upon which we stand and

Why is Paul telling us all this? **READ Verse 29 and 30.**

III. **Conclusion: We are called to more than belief in Christ, but we are also called to a mission that involves suffering.**

A. Why do we suffer? – because we are engaged in the same conflict that Paul had, namely that he was being persecuted for the love of the gospel.

1. Paul’s love of the gospel was the source of his persecution and suffering. This is true for the Philippians and also true for us today. If we suffer, it will be because of our love of the gospel and our love for others that compels us to share the gospel with them. And so as we begin to live lives worthy of the gospel that will involve suffering. (See 2 Tim 3:12)
2. I pray that God would so capture our hearts that our increasing love for him and others would cast out all fear and enable us to stand firm, united, striving side-by-side for the faith of the gospel. By God’s grace this is Harambee’s goal: together, pushing forward, for the faith of the gospel, for the renown of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.