

Series:

STRIVING TOGETHER FOR THE FAITH PHILIPPIANS 1:27-30

Text: Philippians 1:27

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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;

Introduction:

Paul reminds these at Philippi that it's important that testimony or example is right.

The same is true for us today.

Someone once asked, "If we were placed on trial for being a Christian were there be enough evidence to convict us?"

Paul speaks of three areas reminding them and us of their importance.

Note:

1. THERE IS A CONDUCT THAT'S EXPECTED OF A CHRISTIAN

Philippians 1:27

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;

Our conversation that Paul speaks of certainly deal with our conversation but it also speaks of our walk.

It speaks of our conduct and behavior.

It is not only what the Christian says, but how he or she is seen.

Paul is saying that there is a certain conduct that is expected of those that are Christians.

A. This Conduct Is Befitting of a Christian

Notice the word "conversation."

This word is a political word.

The word used is a political word. It is a word that is descriptive of a citizen.

It was a word that the believers at Philippi would have quickly associated with and understood.

Philippi was a Roman colony.

Roman colonies were little bits of Rome that were planted throughout the then known world.

In these colonies, the citizens acted as Romans.

They spoke the language of Rome, wore the dress of Rome, and handled all their affairs as Rome, even though were a long way from Rome.

In essence Paul was saying to them, “You know how citizens of Rome lived and act like Rome.

Now consider how this applies to us as Christians.

As Christians are in this world, but are not of this world. We are pilgrims passing through. Our citizenship is in Heaven and the life that we live should be that of a citizen of Heaven.

The Church is a colony of heaven on earth and we should live as citizens of that heavenly colony.

Not only is this conduct befitting of a Christian but also:

B. This Conduct is Becoming of a Christian

Paul spoke of our conduct as "becometh the gospel of Christ." The word "becometh" means "worthy."

A Christian is to live a life worthy of the gospel.

Note what Paul stated in Ephesians.

Ephesians 4:1

¹ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

Colossians 1:10

¹⁰ That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

The word "worthy" was used to describe the balancing of a scale.

If one wanted to measure an ounce of gold, then you would put in one side of a scale a standard which weighed an ounce.

Then you would put in gold and when the scale balanced out, you would know that you had an ounce of gold.

There is a standard by which we must measure our life.
That standard is a heavenly standard.

We are to live up to that standard and our life be equal
to that standard.

Illustration:

A soldier in the army of Alexander the great was
charged with misbehavior.

He was brought before Alexander about his conduct.

Alexander asked, "What is your name?"

With trembling voice, the soldier replied, "My name is
Alexander, sir."

Again, Alexander the great asked, "What is your
name?"

Again, the soldier replied, "My name is Alexander, sir."

Alexander the Great shouted at him, "Then change
your name or change your life!"

We should live a life that befitting and becoming our
name. As a Christian, we should live as a Christian.

Illustration:

A church member asked her pastor, "We have some neighbors who believe a false gospel.

What literature would you recommend that I give them?"

The pastor opened his Bible to 2 Corinthians 3:2:

2 Corinthians 3:2

² Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

He said, "The best literature in the world for them to read is your life."

Not only is "There a Conduct Expected of a Christian" but also

2. THERE IS A CO-OPERATION TO BE EXHIBITED AS A CHRISTIAN

Philippians 1:27

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;

Now Paul uses an athletic term to describe how a Christian should live as a Christian.

Paul speaks of a unity that is important to the Christian body.

This unity is to be exhibited and shown as a Christian.

Note:

A. There Is To Be an Undivided People

Christians are to stand fast in one spirit and with one mind. Christians are not to be characterized by division and disunity.

Note what the Lord prayed in John 17

John 17:21

²¹ *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*

Christians should be in one spirit and one mind.

Note also:

B. There Is To Be a United Purpose

Christians should not only stand together, but also strive together.

Paul spoke of, "striving together for the faith of the gospel."

He said we have a common goal, the same purpose and cause, and we should be united around that goal, the faith of the gospel.

Illustration:

The word "strive" is an athletic term that describes a team.

It is like a football team consisting of 11 men.

It is not 11 men doing their own thing, but 11 men working together as a team.

One man may be an all-star, but he'll not win the game alone. He needs the other 10 men to block and pass.

Illustration:

Herman Ostry's barn floor was under twenty nine inches of water because of a rising creek. The Bruno, Nebraska, farmer invited a few friends to a barn

raising. He needed to move his entire 17,000 pound barn to a new foundation more than 143 feet away. His son Mike devised a lattice work of steel tubing, and nailed, bolted, and welded it on the inside and the outside of the barn. Hundreds of handles were attached. After one practice lift, 344 volunteers slowly walked the barn up a slight incline, each supporting less than fifty pounds. In just three minutes, the barn was on its new foundation.

The body of Christ can accomplish great things when we work together.

Note lastly not only is there a “There Is a Conduct that’s Expected of a Christian” and a “Co-Operation to be Exhibited As a Christian” but also:

3. THERE IS CONFLICT THAT WILL BE EXPERIENCED BY THE CHRISTIAN

Philippians 1:28-30

²⁸ And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. ²⁹ For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; ³⁰ Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.

There is a certain Christian behavior to be seen in the conflicts of life.

It's one thing to behave as a Christian when things are going well.

It's another thing to behave as a Christian when things are going bad.

Some will shout on the mountain but pout in the valley.

We should not be "terrified" by our adversaries. The word means "to be intimidated."

The word was used of a high strung horse that spooks at every strange movement and sound.

He is describing a specific kind of behavior that ought to be demonstrated on our part when we face adversity in life.

He tells us there is a reason for Christian behavior in such times.

Note:

A. There's a Public Revealing of Our Faith

How we behave when under fire is evidence that the Lord has and is continuing to work in our lives.

This world will never believe what we say until they see what we believe.

Nothing catches the world's attention any faster than to see someone in the hour of adversity than to behave in a valiant and virtuous manner and having great faith in our great God.

It tells them that it is real!

Illustration:

In 1555 Queen Mary came to the throne of England. Over 300 Christians were executed under the orders of "Bloody Mary." Among them were Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley. The two preachers were bound to a Post, and wood was piled high around them and then set on fire. Latimer looked at Ridley and said, "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, as I trust shall never be put out."

Note also not only a Public revealing of Our Faith but also:

B. A Personal Rewarding Of Our Faith

Philippians 1:29

²⁹ *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*

Paul tells us that adversity is "given" to us on the behalf of Christ. It is a gift of God. It puts us in unique company.

It puts us in company with the Lord Jesus. In the fire we not only have the privilege of believing on Christ, but suffering with Christ.

If we looked at all our adversity in this light, it would change the way we behave in it. We would no longer view it as a problem over which to grumble, but a privilege in which to glory.

Close:

A CHRISTIAN SHOULD BE A CHRISTIAN in our conduct, co-operation, and conflict.