

Good News Church GA
Midweek Connect
1-20-26

Sermon Series:
“Joy in the Journey”
Paul’s letter to the Philippians

SCRIPTURE TEXT: Philippians 1:27-30

Life Worthy of the Gospel

²⁷ Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, ³⁰ since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

Sermon + Book Notes (Ch. 4)

**Key Verse: “Standing firm and striving together as one for the faith of the gospel.”
– Philippians 1:27B**

- **BOOK** - “The faith of the gospel” is that body of divine truth given to the church. Jude called it “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). What we believe determines how we behave, and wrong belief ultimately means a wrong life. Each local church is but one generation short of potential extinction. No wonder Satan attacks our young people in particular, seeking to get them away from the faith. ADDED QUOTE (from Drue): *“Satan's greatest weapon is man's ignorance of God's Word.”* – A.W. Tozer

In 360 A.D., Philip II of Macedon invented the nearly impenetrable infantry formation of 256 men in 16 rows of 16 each known as the Macedonian phalanx. Paul very well may have had this in mind in his letter to the church at Philippi.

- **BOOK** – How can a group of Christians fight this enemy? “for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh” (2 Cor. 10:4). We use spiritual weapons – the Word of God and prayer (Eph. 6:11-18; Heb. 4:12), and we must depend on the Holy Spirit to give us the power that we need. But an army must fight together, and this is why Paul sent these admonitions to his friends at Philippi. He was explaining in this paragraph that there are three essentials for victory in the battle to protect the faith: 1) Consistency 2) Cooperation 3) Confidence.

Advancing the Gospel together through...

1. CHARACTER – Gospel Conduct

In Philippians 1:27, Paul challenges the Philippian church to **“conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.”** What does that look like? For answers, look to Ephesians 4:1-3, where Paul challenges the Ephesian church to *“live a life worthy of the calling.”*

- **BOOK** - The most important weapon against the enemy is not a stirring sermon or a powerful book; it is the consistent life of believers. We must *“behave the way citizens (of heaven) are supposed to behave.”*
- **BOOK** – *You are writing a gospel, A chapter each day, By the deeds that you do, And the words that you say. Men read what you write, Whether faithful or true: Just what is the gospel According to you?* – Source Unknown

When asking how this is done, Paul answers in Eph. 4:2-3 by saying, *“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”* It means that no matter what situation you find yourself in, whether being favored or persecuted, make sure that your attitude, words, and actions are in alignment with the gospel and with your personal beliefs (convictions). The essential word here is... LOVE.

2. COURAGE - Confronting Fear

“...without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you.” (vs. 28a)

We all deal with fear. The question is, “Who will we fear more – God or man?” Relating the difference, Nicky Gumbel says, “‘Fear of God’ is an understanding of who God is in relation to us. It means respect, reverence, awe, honor, adoration and worship; it could even be translated as love for God. It recognizes the power, majesty and holiness of God Almighty. It leads to a healthy respect of God and is the antidote to all other fears and phobias we experience in life. Fear God and you need not fear anything else or anyone else. It is no coincidence that as the fear of God has decreased in our society, all the other fears have increased. We need to return to a right relationship with God.”

KEY QUESTION: How does belief become conviction? The pathway for belief to conviction usually begins when we experience crisis, crossroads, or challenges to what we believe.

As I (Drue) reflect in my own life, my belief undoubtedly started by an **overwhelming experience of God's grace**, which came to me by His Spirit through the Word and prayer. It was a belief that penetrated my soul, but there was much room for growth as relates to conviction. That began to happen as I was **challenged in my faith** by other who doubted. It forced me to dive deep into God's Word and really figure out what I believe and what am I willing to stake my name and life to (i.e. conviction). It also happened as I **experienced crisis** (divorce, job loss, financial need). My conviction also grows every time I have an **opportunity to share the love of Christ** with others through my words and/or deeds.

"This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God." (vs. 28b)

Your lack of fear will be a sign to unbelievers that they are going the wrong way (against God) and you're going the right way (with God). Your joy in the midst of suffering will create a lot of questions and those questions will create opportunity.

3. CRISIS - Called to Suffer

For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have." (vs. 29-30)

The call to suffer is in the DNA of the Christian faith. Jesus' instructions included suffering for his disciples (Matthew 10:16-20, 26-31), Paul (Acts 9:15-16), and us (Philippians 1:29).

- **BOOK** – These battles prove that we are saved (Phil. 1:29). Actually, going through spiritual conflict is one way we have *to grow in Christ*. God gives us the strength we need to stand firm against the enemy, and this confidence is proof to him that he will lose and we are on the winning side. (Phil. 1:28).

Suffering (def): passion, to feel heavy emotion. Suffering is valuable to the Christian faith because it:

1. moves faith from belief (intellect) to conviction / passion (heart, mind, body, and soul).
2. strengthens faith (i.e., caterpillar to butterfly - the struggle is necessary to strengthen its wings)
3. attaches us to Jesus (i.e., we share in his sufferings) in the deepest expression of love, that which is sacrificial (more on this in Philippians 2)

If you're not confident that you'll have the character or courage to hold up under crisis, that's good! Let your lack point you to Jesus. In your strength, you don't have what it takes, but in God's strength (through His Spirit, His Son, and His people), we are more than conquerors.

Ultimately, your faithfulness to Him is undergirded, motivated, and empowered by His faithfulness to you.

If and when you're facing a crisis, trial, suffering or persecution for your faith, God will give you everything that you need in that moment. He will give you the words to speak, the courage to stand, and the grace to persevere in the midst of the fire, and as you do, you will experience His presence and his joy, and God will use your courage to rescue others the same way He's rescued you. And that's Good News!

Discussion Questions

1. **TEXT** – What verse jumps out at you from the text? Why?
2. **BOOK TAKE AWAYS** – Do you have any take aways from the book?
3. **FAITH OF THE GOSPEL** – What is “the faith of the gospel” that we’re defending? Why do Christians need to know what he or she believes?
4. **PHALANX** – What does the Macedonian phalanx look like for the Christian Church? What are some of the spiritual weapons we can use in our battle against Satan? Which weapon is most important?
5. **ADVANCING THE GOSPEL** – What are the 3 ways Paul talks about in vs. 27-30 for how the church can advance the gospel together?
6. **CHARACTER** – What does it mean to “*conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ?*”
7. **CONVICTION** – What’s the difference between belief and conviction? How does belief become conviction?
8. **CONSISTENCY** – Why is consistency in the Christian life important?
9. **SUFFERING** – Why is suffering such a valuable element of the Christian faith?
10. **REFLECTION** – How do you know if your faith is belief or conviction?