



Philippians

Living in the Joy of Knowing Christ!

The Joy of Knowing Heaven's Citizenship!

Philippians 1:27-30

Message #5 of 16 – S991

Sermon given on April 3, 2022



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The Joy of Knowing Heaven's Citizenship!

Philippians 1:27-30

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Philippians 1**
- Today, we continue our series through the book of **Philippians – Living in the Joy of Knowing Christ!**
- As Christians, we have dual citizenship
- We are citizens of the US, and we are citizens of Heaven
- Both seek to have the place of highest authority in our lives
- And yielding to one will bring negative consequences from the other
- Let's pray and then we will look at that how that applies to us
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **The Joy of Knowing Heaven's Citizenship!**
- In **Philippians 3:20-21** Paul speaks of our citizenship
For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.
- We became naturalized citizens of heaven through faith in Jesus
Christ Colossians 1:13-14
He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.
- As a radical expression of God's grace, He instantly made you a full citizen of the kingdom of God the moment you believed in Jesus and gave your life to Him
- With that citizenship came all the rights, privileges, and protections God has promised believers in His Word
- But it also came with responsibilities
- **Philippians 1:27a**
- Philippi was a city in the area known as Macedonia
- It was different than other cities of Macedonia

- It had been conferred with the designation of a Roman city – with all the rights and privileges of a city in Italy
- And its citizens had the responsibility to live in a manner that was commensurate with their citizenship
- The Roman government claimed a right to determine how they lived – customs, laws, and cultural norms
- Paul is calling them to ‘let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ.’
- Paul has made it clear in this letter that the gospel of Christ is everything to him
- The word ‘gospel’ means ‘good news’
- The good news of Christ is this **1 Timothy 1:15**
This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...
- Before Christ saved us, we all lived any way we thought was best
- But the way we lived was in direct violation of God’s commands and we were spiritually separated from Him
- We were all lost in our sin and there was nothing we could do about it
- Because of God’s love He expressed His grace and sent Jesus **2 Corinthians 5:19**
... God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them...
- God reconciled sinners to Himself through Christ
- By His life, death, burial, and resurrection
- Christ died so that each one of us could be saved from the consequences of being alienated from God by our sin
- Our conduct, or our manner of life, should reflect the worth of what was given to have eternal life
- It is right for me to let my conduct reflect that
- I should love him with my whole being, I should share the love He shared with me with others, I should share the hope I now have in Christ
- Jesus tells us how to do that **John 14:15**
If you love Me, keep My commandments.
- Our conduct is worthy of the gospel when we are doing what God has said in His Word

- Paul then goes on to describe three characteristics of conduct that is worthy of the gospel
- The first one – **Persevering Together**
- **Philippians 1:27b**
- ‘stand fast in one spirit’ or ‘continue to be in one spirit’
- We will see later in the message that life was not easy for the Philippians
- Life is filled with good things and bad things – easy and hard
- And all of those things have the ability to change the way you conduct your life
- The OT book of Judges gives a powerful picture of human nature
- When life was good, the people forgot about the God who made life good for them
- God would then send some hard thing into their life, and they would come running back to God
- It is God’s will that we persevere with Him through the good and the bad
- When Paul says ‘stand fast in one spirit’ = the Holy Spirit
- And based on the rest of this verse we know he is speaking of the Holy Spirit’s work within the church **1 Corinthians 12:13**

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

- This is a call for unity within the community of the church under the leading of and by the power of the Holy Spirit
- It is much easier to ‘stand fast’ when we are together than when we are apart or alone
- The second characteristic of worthy conduct – **Working Together**
- **Philippians 1:27c**
- ‘with one mind striving together’
- ‘Striving together’ has the meaning of working side-by-side against opposition
- Jesus warned us that if we chose to live worthy of the gospel of Christ that we would be opposed **John 15:18-20**

If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated you*.¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.²⁰ Remember the

word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

- Most of the world does not agree with what we believe
- If you believe that God is real and that the Bible is true and the source of truth, then you are in the minority
- Jesus said in John 7:7 that the world hates Him because its works are evil
- If you live worthy of the gospel, your life will shine the light of God onto the evil works of those around you
- And if the world does oppose you in your faith, the best place for you to be is in a real, vital community of believers who are seeking to walk worthy of the gospel of Christ
- Paul recognizes that this might not be appealing to some people
- People want to be accepted by the people around them
- And some people will do anything to avoid conflict
- But the truth is, if you live worthy of the gospel of Christ, you will encounter conflict
- And tells us how to do it
- **Philippians 1:28**
- The word 'terrified' has the idea of a panicked reaction.
- The idea of the culture coming against us might invoke a feeling of fear.
- Paul is telling them not to panic.
- Paul is reminding them that they are citizens of heaven.
- God is in control. Stay calm! God calls us to a fearless faith. Jesus said **John 4:4**

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

- The gospel is the power of God to salvation **Romans 1:16**
For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.
- Be fearless!
- Paul tells us why unbelievers actively oppose the gospel and those who are saved by it – 'proof to them of perdition'
- 'perdition' = destruction or ruin

- If someone rejects the grace of God in the person of Jesus Christ, the only thing left is judgment
 - When we live a life worthy of the gospel of Jesus, something deep within the heart of unbelievers knows that it means something bad for them
 - Their only hope is to turn from their sin and to Christ
 - Unfortunately, they might have a different response
 - The third characteristic of worthy conduct – **Suffer Together**
 - **Philippians 1:29-30**
 - This is a concept that may be very hard for some Christians to accept
 - ‘it has been granted’ has the same root as the word ‘grace’
 - It means to give generously
 - Two things have been granted by God to believers
 - The first is the faith to believe in Jesus – we thank Him for that
 - The second is a little harder to thank Him for – ‘to suffer for His sake’
 - I want to make a distinction here – between suffering in life and suffering for Christ – Paul is referring to the latter
 - Suffering through a difficult relationship or physical handicap or illness or financial difficulty probably isn’t ‘suffering for His sake’
 - Your rebellious child is not ‘your cross to bear’ for Christ
 - Some suffering is common to all mankind
 - The suffering that Paul is referring to is the suffering you endure because you are a believer
 - When you are mocked for your faith, or passed over for promotions because you are a Christian, or friends avoid you because of what you believe
 - Faith and suffering are twin gifts of God.
 - The gracious gift of salvation is a magnificent blessing.
 - It proves that God looks upon you with favor.
 - Suffering in the life of a believer for being a Christian (persecution) is not a sign of God’s neglect, but a blessing of fellowship with Christ **2 Timothy 3:12**
- Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.**
- This thought would be expressed by Paul in a prayer **Philippians 3:10**

...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death...

- We are citizens of Heaven and as such we ought to live a life that is worthy of gospel of Christ
- And if we do it right, it might not be easy
- The theme of this message is ‘Together’
- You probably all know the saying, ‘It takes teamwork to make the dream work!’
- God’s ‘dream’ is that the whole world would come to see Jesus as their Savior
- And He has commissioned all of us to be ambassadors of the gospel of Jesus – together – united in the Holy Spirit, persevering together, working together, and walking through suffering together
- **Persevering Together** – Love Jesus enough to get to know what someone is struggling with
- Pray for them – really pray for them – come alongside them to help
- **Working Together** – This church is committed to standing upon the truth until Jesus comes to get us
- Work with us to do that – get involved in something we are doing – help us with what we do here – give generously
- **Suffer Together** – Fearlessly live a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ – speak the truth in love
- Example: Suppose someone asks you where you stand on gender identity
- Respond: I stand with God and upon His Word – male/female
- They respond: I believe there are 58 genders
- Respond: I understand why you might believe that. You don’t believe in God or His Word. You are trusting in what the culture says. I am trusting in the unchanging God of Heaven and in His Truth – Bible.
- Don’t try to change their mind – keeping bringing them to the truth
- And if it brings suffering into your life, rejoice that God has granted you to suffer for Christ’s sake
- And then reach out to your brothers and sisters to stand with you in your suffering

- Jesus is the reason for our lives and the gospel is the pathway for people to come to Jesus
- We have walked that pathway and have been graced with salvation
- Let's now walk worthy of that salvation
- **Pray**