

The Book of Philippians

Lesson 4

Study Notes

Conduct Worthy of the Gospel

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Text: Philippians 1:27-30.

Introduction: This text is encouragement to live worthily of the Gospel and is the third mention of the Gospel Philippians 1. In verse 7 there is the _____ of the Gospel; in verses 13-18 there is the _____ of the Gospel; and here in verse 27 there is the _____ of the Gospel. All three are important! In verse 27 Paul begins to set forth the duties of God's people to live as citizens of Heaven. The rules of the gospel are to be applied to all our conduct - to our conversation, business transactions, modes of dress, style of living, entertainments, etc. There is nothing which we do, or say, or purpose, that is to be an exception from those rules. There is a way of living which is appropriate to the gospel, or which is such as the gospel _____. There is something which the gospel would secure as its proper fruits in all our conduct, and by which our lives should be regulated. It would distinguish us from the frivolous, and from those who seek honor and wealth as their supreme object. If all Christians were under the influence of the gospel, there would be something in their dress, temper, conversation, and aims, which would distinguish them from others; The gospel is not a thing of nothing; nor is it intended that it should exert no influence on its friends. It is very important that Christians should frame their lives by the rules of the gospel, and, to this end, should study them and know what they are. This is important:

- (1) Because they are the best and _____;*
- (2) Because it is only in this way that Christians _____;*
- (3) Because they have solemnly covenanted with the Lord to take his _____;*
- (4) Because it is only in this way that they can enjoy salvation; and,*
- (5) Because it is only by this that they can have _____ on a dying bed.*

If people live as "becometh the gospel," they live well. Their lives are honest and honorable; they are people of truth and uprightness; they will have no sources of regret when they die, and they will not give occasion to their friends to hang their heads with shame in the remembrance of them. No man on a dying bed ever yet regretted that he had framed his life by the rules of the gospel, or felt that his conduct had been conformed too much to it.

I. God's People Should Live Lives That Are Becoming to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:27

The Philippians would have better understood Paul's comments than we do today. Their city had become a _____ through a series of events which included a civil war between Octavian and Anthony. After the war, a number of soldiers who had been favorable toward Anthony settled in Philippi; for that reason, it was declared a Roman colony, a miniature Rome. As such, it was given special privileges; although it was _____ miles from Rome, Philippi was Italian soil and the citizens of the city had their names on the rolls in Rome and considered themselves Romans.

The word "conversation" in our text is a political term and here means " _____ " or "life as citizens."

The Philippians were citizens of two worlds. They were citizens of the Roman world and they were citizens, if saved, of heaven. Their conduct was to reflect what Christ had done in them. God wants all of His children to be holy in _____ and _____ so that spiritual unity and power may be achieved.

The word "becometh" means that which is fitting; that which is suited to; to make attractive. It also means "_____." Again, the emphasis is on see that you live to make the gospel attractive to the world. So often what people think of the gospel is what they see in our lives.

II. God's People Should Live God-Honoring Lives Expressed in Oneness.

"That ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;"

To stand fast with one mind; signifies _____ of purpose and greatness of power. One can only marvel at four sureties of the gospel.

1. It is divinely _____. **Jude 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.** Nothing can be added to or subtracted from it.

2. It is divinely _____. **Galatians 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.** It is not one of many gospels, but it is the only gospel.

3. It is divinely _____. **1Corinthians 15:1-4.** The gospel came by Revelation.

4. It is divinely _____. **Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.** The gospel has the power to blast the rock-like resistance of the sin-hardened heart.

There is oneness when we stand firm on the doctrines relating to the gospel of Christ. One in spirit is with the aid of the Holy Spirit; but it speaks of the spirit of cooperation; of having the same love and concern for the gospel. The church's one desire and effort should be to accomplish God's purpose here on earth. To strive together means to labor, work hard, _____.

The story is told of a man who had several sons who were always squabbling. Their disunity was hurting the family business on which they all depended for their livelihood. The father called his sons together and handed a thin bamboo cane to the strongest of them. "Snap the cane," the old man said. Thinking his father had taken leave of his senses, the young man complied. The old man tied two thin bamboo canes together. "Snap these," he said. Again, the young man had no difficulty. The father kept adding more and more canes to the bundle. Soon the son was sweating and straining to snap them and before long he found the task completely beyond his strength. The object lesson needed no comment. Paul's concern was that the saints at Philippi unite in the task of getting the gospel out. Whether present or absent he wanted to hear that they were standing fast, united in a common cause, battling with a single mind for the faith of the gospel.

III. God's People Should Have a God-Honoring View Concerning Her Adversaries.

Philippians 1:28 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.

There will be adversaries; those who work against the gospel of Christ. The word "terrified" means to _____, scare, alarm. The word was used of _____ being scared and startled and turning about or springing aside. A horse generally panics when it only half sees some object. Paul is saying in effect, don't be terrified by what you half see. We are to show that we depend on God to face any opposition in a way becoming the gospel. We know that a determined unwavering stand for the faith of the gospel sends a two-fold message: (1) To our adversaries it will be an evident token of their perdition. (2) To the Christian it becomes a token of salvation.

"which is to them an evident token of perdition" This is a _____ term denoting proof obtained by an appeal to the facts. The opposition of the adversaries was in fact strong evidence that they were rushing headlong into perdition. The word "perdition" means _____ or _____.

IV. God's People Should Have a God-Honoring View of Suffering.

Philippians 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

The Christian's privileges are to believe on Him and to suffer for Him, and always in that order. It can be said that God confers upon us the _____ of suffering with Christ and for Christ.

2Timothy 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

2Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Paul knew what it was to suffer for Christ. As soon as he comes to Philippi; he and Silas were thrown into prison after having been beaten. But that did not deter him from worshipping his Lord.

Acts 16:23-25.

Suffering for Christ is a token of _____, not a sign that God has turned His face away.

Dr. Roy L. Laurin describes the caliber of those first-century believers in the following words: "Caesar said, "We will soon root up this Christianity. Off with their heads." The different governors hastened to put on after another of the disciples to death; but the more they persecuted them, the more they multiplied. The proconsuls had orders to destroy Christians: the more they hunted them, the more Christians there were, until, at last, men pressed to the judgment seat and asked to be permitted to die for Christ. They invented torments; they dragged saints at the heels of wild horses' they laid them upon red hot gridirons' they pulled off the skin from their flesh piece by piece; they were sawn asunder; they were wrapped up in skins, and daubed with pitch, and set in Nero's gardens at night to burn; they were left to rot in dungeons; they were made a spectacle to all men in the amphitheater; the bears hugged them to death; the lions tore them to pieces; the wild bulls tossed them upon their horns; and yet Christianity spread... We cannot become greater or better than what we allow God to do in us, for us, or through us. God cannot get depth out of a shallow life. Gold cannot be had except by fire. Sap cannot flow except by a wound."

If we as believers share in Christ's cross, we will share in His crown. As Christ gives grace to be saved, He also gives grace to the dying. And even as we are counted worthy to suffer for Him, He will give us the grace to suffer for His name's sake.