

**DATE OF MESSAGE:** September 25, 2016

**MESSAGE TITLE:** Living a Gospel Life

**SCRIPTURE:** Philippians 1:27-28

### **KEY TRUTH**

Our lives should reflect the life-changing truth of the Gospel. Anything that doesn't show the power and importance of Jesus is not worth calling a Gospel life.

### **GETTING STARTED**

Paul encouraged believers to act as citizens of God's kingdom and to value their eternal heritage more than their Roman citizenship. The residents of Philippi generally took great pride in their Roman citizenship. Roman citizenship could be gained in several ways: birth to Roman parents, retirement from the army, being freed from slavery by a Roman master, buying freedom from slavery, being given citizenship by a Roman general or emperor as an individual or as part of a political unit or purchase of citizenship. Roman citizens enjoyed certain rights which others did not, such as voting in Rome, the promise of a fair trial, the right to appeal to Caesar and freedom from harsh punishment.

### **OBSERVATION**

What does Paul hope will unite all believers in 'one spirit with one mind'?

The phrase 'standing firm' has military undertones and calls to mind images of a phalanx of Roman soldiers standing back to back, protecting each other while resisting the enemy. How does Paul want these believers to stand firm against the enemy?

Paul encourages the Philippian believers to value the Gospel above all else. What does he mean by the phrase, 'striving side by side for the faith of the gospel'?

What opponents did Paul have in mind in verse 28? What about these opponents might scare the Philippian believers?

What will signal the mark of destruction for those who oppose the Philippian believers?

## **APPLICATION**

*Are you living a manner of life worthy of the gospel? How are you pressing into Jesus for help in living a life that reflects the gospel?*

*How are you standing firm against the enemy with other believers?*

*What opponents to the gospel do you face? How will you deal with them?*

*What will you do this week to show that you value your heavenly citizenship more than earthly rights and privileges?*

## **PRAYER**

*Lord Jesus, please help me live in a manner worthy of the gospel today. Graciously show me where I fall short and lead me to repentance. I want to stand shoulder to shoulder with other believers in defense of the gospel. Remind me that my brothers and sisters in Christ are not my enemies. The enemies of the gospel are not flesh and blood but are spiritual in nature (Eph. 6:12). Cover me with the armor of God so I can take my stand against such enemies.*

## **SHARE POINT**

Read and review the application questions. Share with someone in your life how God's Word is changing you into a growing disciple. Encourage that person to do the same. That person could be a family member, a friend, a co-worker or a neighbor.

## **COMMENTARY NOTES**

1:27 Philippi prided itself on being a Roman colony. Offering the honor and privilege of Roman citizenship, Paul reminds the congregation that they should look to Christ, not Caesar, for their model of behavior, since their primary allegiance is to God and his kingdom. They need to stand together with one another and with Paul in striving for the gospel. Paul's emphasis on unity may suggest some division within the Philippian congregation. Perhaps the disunity is one reason he mentions the 'overseers and deacons' at the outset of the letter, for they are required to minister in a way that promotes unity.

1:28 As the Philippians maintain courage in the face of their opponents, these opponents will realize that such remarkable strength could come only from God, and thus anyone who continues to oppose God's people will be

marked for destruction. Destruction here means eternal destruction, hence these are different opponents from those who antagonized Paul in verses 15-18, who seem to have been believers. A different city is in view as well, for here Paul speaks about what is happening in Philippi while in verses 15-18, his opposition is in Rome. But God's sustaining grace amid trouble will assure the believers of their own final salvation. Paul follows the teaching of Jesus here, reminding them that persecution is a sign that they belong to Christ.

### **SOURCES CONSULTED**

ESV Study Bible

Serendipity Bible for Personal and Small Group Study