**Notes for week 3**

**Surrendered Attitude/Philippians 1:27-2:11**

People are the sandpaper of life. While we may think others need to change, God often uses difficult people to change us. And while we cannot change people, we certainly can change our response to people.

The Apostle Paul is acknowledging that we will indeed have conflict with people-both inside the church and outside the church. He is giving us specifics about both. But whether it is difficulties in the church or outside the church, three similarities can be seen:

* What we do matters (Our conduct, behavior)
* We need each other
* We have examples to follow

**Conflict from the Outside. Vs 27-30 .** We are to *conduct* ourselves (behave as a citizen) in a manner that is in balance with the gospel. We live according to Scripture, empowered by the Holy Spirit. The Philippians were Roman citizens and they were very proud of that fact. But paul is reminding them that they are now citizens of a higher order-citizens of heaven (Philippians 3:20)For a brief season on earth, we have a dual citizenship. We are to be good, responsible citizens here on earth, but ultimately, we answer to Christ and our citizenship in the kingdom of God.

We (believers in Christ) are to *stand firm* (Persevering, standing still, not running away). We are to stay **connected with other believers** having the same purpose, same aim, same goal of glorifying Christ. Why?

We will always have adversaries or opponents—people in society who oppose the gospel and create difficult circumstances. Paul warns that we are not to be *alarmed* by these people (Terrified or frightened). In fact, it is a privilege to suffer for the gospel. Instead of being alarmed, we are to stand firm with other believers in Christ.

Satan, our ultimate enemy, will try to isolate us and convince us that we are alone in our struggles. Like the predator he is, (1Peter 5:8-9) he will try to separate us from other believers, make us believe no one has ever suffered like this before. When he isolates us, he then attacks us. Paul is saying, “**We Need each Other!”** **There are no healthy “Lone Ranger” Christians**. We are designed for community. There is strength and encouragement as we face difficult circumstances caused by enemies of the gospel.

**Our behavior matters as we stand firm with other Christians**. We are not rogue believers, doing our own thing. Like the Roman phalanx, we work together, moving in unity. Remember unity is not uniformity. We are all different, we have different giftedness. We think differently. But we are to be unified in Christ, behaving in a manner that represents Christ.

Verse 30, Paul says these Christians are experiencing the same kinds of troubles that he has been experiencing. **He invites them to look at his example**. He is not presenting himself as perfect, rather he is a mature believer who has not just weathered the storms, but has found peace and joy in the storms of life.

**Conflict from the Inside.** If you have attended a church for more than 10 minutes, you will understand that there are conflicts even among Christians. There are no perfect churches because there are no perfect people. So how do we deal with “EGR” people in the church? (Extra Grace Required). Paul begins With encouragement.

Philippians 2:1-2 go together and they are meant to encourage us. Verse 1 explains what we have in Christ. Four “if” statements. While the word “If” in the English language seems to raise doubt, in the Greek it means “since”. “Since it is true….”. Read the four statements-the four things we have in Christ:

* *Encouragement in Christ—*When we know Christ we encouraged/strengthened—particularly through Scripture and the Holy Spirit. When we are being “sandpaperd” by conflict in the church remember to look to your encouragement in Christ.
* *Consolation of Love*—consolation is comfort. We are loved with agape love—a love of the will, a love that will not let us go. When we are facing difficulties in the church, remember we are loved by Almighty God.
* *Fellowship in the Spirit*. We have communion with the Holy Spirit-He lives in us, guiding us, directing our actions, empowering our living. But we also have communion with other believers who also have the indwelling Holy Spirit. We are not alone when facing tough people and circumstances
* *Affection and compassion* Literally means the bowels of mercy. The compassion we receive from Christ comes from His heart-His love for us-it is a compassion that is particularly demonstrated when are suffering.

Now verse two says, demonstrate, or give these four things to other believers as we work together for the sake of gospel, always giving God glory.

Verses 3 & 4 are where the rubber hit the road. Do nothing from selfishness (selfish interests and motives) or empty conceit (vain glory, attention seeking). We operate within the church with humility of mind (having a correct estimation of ourselves—understanding we are: sinners saved by grace) **Humility is not a doormat mentality, neither is it a martyr syndrome**. It is a declaration of total dependence on Christ. Galatians 2:20 sums it up! “**Not I, but Christ”** Paul is not saying we must neglect ourselves, but indeed we must consider others first. How can we live this way—it seems impossible.

We have an example for this kind of living. It is Christ. Verses 5-11 are filled with doctrine. But looking generally at these verses we see three things.

* *Christ emptied Himself*. He set aside, for a brief time, the glory and the spender of heaven. He did not set aside His deity. He has always been God. He chose to humble Himself and be obedient to the Father, laying aside the His ability to fully express His deity.
* **Christ** became **a se**rvant. He took on the role of a bond-servant in the form of a human being. He served the Father by serving us. (we benefited from his service/obedience to God).
* *Christ sacrificed*. He gave his life that we might be saved. He carried out God’s eternal plan for salvation.

God highly exalted Jesus. He is Jesus-God’s Messiah and indeed God. Now we are to follow His example within the church

* Empty ourselves of the flesh—die daily to ourselves
* Serve-Just as Christ served
* Sacrifice—willingly obey Christ, living sacrificially for Him—no matter what the cost.