



Prepare for Battle!

Philippians 1:27–30

Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL:
Victor Books, 1996), 69–73.



Philippians 1:27–30 (NKJV)

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,

28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.

29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

30 having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.



- The Christian life is not a playground; it is a battleground. We are sons in the family, enjoying the fellowship of the Gospel (Phil. 1:1–11); we are servants sharing in the furtherance of the Gospel (Phil. 1:12–26), but we are also soldiers defending the faith of the Gospel.
- And the believer with the single mind, a Christ like mind, can have the joy of the Holy Spirit even during battle.



- "The faith of the Gospel" is that divine truth given to the church. Jude calls it "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).
- Paul warns in 1 Timothy 4:1 that "in the latter times some shall depart from the faith."
- God committed this spiritual treasure to Paul (1 Tim. 1:11), and he, in turn, committed it to others, like Timothy (1 Tim. 6:20), whose responsibility was to commit this deposit to still others (2 Tim. 2:2).



- This is why the church must engage in a teaching ministry so that each new generation of believers will know, appreciate, and use the great legacy of the faith.
- But there is an enemy who is out to steal the treasure from God's people. Paul had met the enemy in Philippi, and he was now facing him in Rome.
- If Satan can only rob believers of their Christian faith, the doctrines that are distinctively theirs, he can cripple and defeat the Gospel's ministry.



- It is sad to hear people say, "I don't care what you believe, just so long as you live right."
- What we believe determines how we behave, and wrong belief ultimately means a sinful 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."
- How can a group of Christians fight this enemy?



- "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh" (2 Cor. 10:4, NASB).
- Peter took up a sword in the Garden, and Jesus rebuked him (John 18:10–11).
- 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 we need.
- But an army must fight together, which is why Paul sends these warnings to his friends at Philippi.

In this paragraph, he explains that there are three essentials for victory in the battle to protect "the faith."



Consistency (Phil. 1:27a)

- 27 "Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ,"
- The most important weapon against the enemy is not an exciting sermon or a powerful book; it is believers' consistent life.
- The verb Paul uses (*Let - politeuomai /pol•it•yoo•om•ahee*) is related to our word politics. He is saying, "Behave the way citizens are supposed to behave."



- Paul suggests that we Christians are the citizens of heaven, and while we are on earth, we ought to behave like heaven's citizens.

Philippians 3:20 (NKJV)

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

- It would be a significant expression to the Philippi people because Philippi was a Roman colony, and its citizens were Roman citizens, protected by Roman law.



- The church of Jesus Christ is a group of heaven citizens on earth! And we ought to behave like the citizens of heaven.

Am I conducting myself in a manner worthy of the Gospel?" is a good question for us to ask ourselves regularly.

Ephesians 4:1 (NKJV)

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,

Walk worthy means walking worthy of the Lord and pleasing Him.



Colossians 1:10 (NKJV)

that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

We do not behave to go to heaven, as though our good works could save us, but we behave because our names are already written in heaven, and our citizenship is in heaven.



Cooperation (Phil. 1:27b)

“I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel”

- Paul now changes the illustration from politics to athletics. The word translated "striving together" gives us our English word "athletics."
- Paul pictures the church as a team, and he reminds them that teamwork wins victories.
- Keep in mind that there was a division in the church at Philippi.



- For one thing, two women were not getting along with each other (Phil. 4:2).
- The fellowship members were taking sides, as is often the case, and the resulting division was hindering the work of the church.

Matthew 12:25 (NKJV)

But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.



- The enemy is always happy to see internal divisions in a local ministry.
- "Divide and conquer!" is his motto, and too often, he has his way.
- It is as believers stand together that they can overcome the wicked one.
- Throughout this letter, Paul uses an interesting device to emphasize the importance of unity.



συναθλέω [sunathleo /soon·ath·leh·o/] v translates to strive at the same time with another.

- In the Greek language, the prefix sun- means "with, together," and when used with different words, strengthens the idea of unity. *(It is somewhat like our prefix co-.)*
- In Philippians 1:27, the Greek word is sunathleo—"striving together as athletes."



- The critical word is together: standing firmly together in one spirit, striving together against the enemy, and doing it with one mind and heart.

Ephesians 4:16 (NKJV)

from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

We have to work together as a team if we are going to win.



- There is one goal—to honor Christ and do His will. If we all work together, we can reach the goal, win the prize, and glorify the Lord.
- In other words, Paul is reminding us again of the need for the single mind, being Christ minded.
- There is joy in our lives, even as we battle the enemy if we live for Christ and the Gospel and practice "Christian teamwork."
- We are citizens of heaven and, therefore, should walk consistently.
- We are members of the same "team" and should work cooperatively.



Confidence (Phil. 1:28–30)

Philippians 1:28–30 (NKJV)

28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.

29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

30 having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.



Confidence (Phil. 1:28–30)

- "Don't be alarmed by your opponents!" The word Paul uses pictures a horse shying away from the battle.
- To be sure, nobody blindly runs into a fight; but then, no true believer should deliberately avoid facing the enemy.
- In these verses, Paul gives us several encouragements that give us confidence in the battle.



FIRST

These Battles Prove That We Are Saved *(Phil. 1:29)*

- We not only believe in Christ but also suffer for Christ. Paul calls this “the fellowship of His sufferings” (Phil. 3:10).
- For some reason, many new believers believe that trusting Christ means the end of their battles. In reality, it means the beginning of new battles.
- “In the world you will have tribulation” (John 16:33).

2 Timothy 3:12 (NKJV)

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.



SECOND

The Presence Of Conflict Is A Privilege; We Suffer “For His Sake.”

- Paul tells us that this conflict is “granted” to us—it is a gift!
- If we were suffering for ourselves, it would be no privilege; but it is a high and holy honor because we are suffering for and with Christ.
- After all, He suffered for us, and a willingness to suffer for Him is the very least we can do to show our love and gratitude.



Romans 8:17–18 (NKJV)

17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.



THIRD

Encouragement Is This: Others Are Experiencing The Same Conflict *(Phil. 1:30)*

- Satan wants us to think we are alone in the battle, that our difficulties are unique, but such is not the case.
- Paul reminds the Philippians that he is going through the same difficulties they are experiencing hundreds of miles from Rome!

1 Peter 5:8–9 (NKJV)

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.



THIRD

Encouragement Is This: Others Are Experiencing The Same Conflict *(Phil. 1:30)*

- A change in geography is usually no solution to spiritual problems because human nature is the same wherever you go, and the enemy is everywhere.
- Knowing that my fellow believers are also sharing in the battle is an encouragement for me to keep going and keep praying for them as I pray for myself.



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).
- As we face the enemy and depend on the Lord, He gives us all we need for the battle.



So, the single mind enables us to have joy during the battle because it results in consistency, cooperation, and confidence.

We experience the joy of “spiritual teamwork” as we strive together for the faith of the Gospel.

Prepare For Battle!

