



The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians

Exhortation and the Example of Christ

Philippians 1:27-30; Philippians 2:1-18

- I. AN EXHORTATION IN SUFFERING (Philippians 1:27-30)
 - A. As It Becometh the Gospel (Philippians 1:27)
 1. Conversation defined
 - a. In the immediate context
 - (1) The associated word
 - a) “Only let your *conversation*”
 - b) “I may hear of your *affairs*.”
 - (2) The descriptive phrases
 - a) Standing fast in one spirit
 - b) With one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel
 - b. In the scriptures
 - (1) Modern usage of the word *conversation* is often limited to a situation where two people speak to each other.
 - (2) The Bible, however, uses the word *conversation* in a different manner.
 - (3) 1 Peter 3:1 shows that a conversation can be accomplished “without the word.”
 - (4) This truth is strengthened in several other verses where the Bible connects works (not necessarily words) to the believer’s conversation (James 3:13; 1 Peter 2:12).
 - (5) Our conversation is something that others can behold (1 Peter 2:12; 1 Peter 3:2) and consider (Hebrews 13:7).
 - (6) Obviously, this would be more than merely a time where two people are speaking to each other.
 - (7) A basic scriptural definition would be *our way of life in front of others*.
 - (8) This would include what we say to others, but is not limited to that.
 2. Conversation demonstrated
 - a. Its allowance—“Only LET your conversation”
 - b. Its appearance
 - (1) In Paul’s presence—“that whether I come and see you”
 - (2) In Paul’s absence—“or else be absent”
 - (3) Note: A godly believer’s walk or conversation does not change because of his surroundings or lack of surroundings (see Philippians 2:12; Ephesians 6:5-6; Colossians 3:22-23). In other words, he does not modify his conversation in order to please godly men or satisfy ungodly men.



3. Conversation detailed
 - a. It should be becoming (Psalm 93:5; Matthew 3:15; Romans 16:2; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Timothy 2:10; Titus 2:3), which means to agree with or be fitting.
 - (1) Our conversation ought to agree with the gospel of Christ and the new life that we have in Him.
 - (2) According to 1 Peter 1:15, our conversation ought to be holy because our Lord is holy.
 - (3) In 2 Peter 3:11, we learn that the dissolving of this world at the end of the day of the Lord ought to cause us to presently walk “in all holy conversation and godliness.”
 - (4) In other words, our practical Christian life ought to resemble the change that took place on the inside at salvation.
 - (5) Others ought to be able to see the Lord Jesus Christ in our actions and in our way of life.
 - (6) This world, that does not know the Lord, ought to get glimpses of His conversation in ours.
 - b. It should strive for the gospel. The believer’s conversation should become his own conversion and should also point others to a desire to know the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. As Having No Fear (Philippians 1:28)

1. The source of suffering—“your adversaries” (1 Corinthians 16:9)
 - a. No doubt this originates with our great adversary, the Devil (1 Peter 5:8).
 - b. But, in the context, it is obvious it is speaking of earthly adversaries.
2. The testimony of suffering (see 2 Thessalonians 1:5-6; 1 Peter 4:12-14)
 - a. For your adversaries—“of perdition”; While the word *perdition* could be descriptive of behaviour, its contrast with the word *salvation* seems to make it more indicative of position or condition.
 - b. For you—“of salvation”
 - c. Modern believers seem to do everything possible to avoid suffering and the testimony associated with it, but the early church rejoiced in such times (Acts 5:41-42; 2 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Peter 4:13-16).

C. As It Is the Gift of God (Philippians 1:29)

1. The recipient of the gift—“unto you”
2. The giver of the gift—“in the behalf of Christ”
3. The nature of the gift
 - a. “not only to believe on him”
 - b. “also to suffer for his sake”
 - c. Every believer readily understands his ability to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8-9), but equally so, the Lord has given man the ability to suffer for the Lord’s sake.



- D. As It Was in Paul (Philippians 1:30)
1. The testimony of suffering was one that would be familiar to the people because of what they saw through the life and testimony of the apostle Paul.
 2. This testimony was evident in two ways:
 - a. They had *seen* it in him previously (Acts 16:19-39) while he was in their presence.
 - b. They now *heard* it to be in him (Philippians 1:12-19; Philippians 1:7, 29-30; see postscript) because he was in Rome and not visible to their eyes.
- II. THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST (Philippians 2:1-11)
- A. The Example of His Love (Philippians 2:1-2)
1. The perfect example (Philippians 2:1)
 - a. The *consolation* in Christ (Romans 15:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:16)
 - b. The *comfort* of love (2 Corinthians 1:3-5; Colossians 2:2)
 - c. The *fellowship* of the Spirit
 - d. The *bowels and mercies* (Philippians 1:8; Colossians 3:12; Philemon 1:7, 12, 20; 1 John 3:17)
 2. The desire for the saints (Philippians 2:2)
 - a. The desire for Paul
 - (1) For his joy to be fulfilled
 - (2) The apostle's joy was associated with the people of God.
 - a) His joy was their joy (2 Corinthians 2:3).
 - b) He joyed for the joy of Titus (2 Corinthians 7:13).
 - c) He joyed with the Philippians (Philippians 2:17-18).
 - d) The people of God were his joy (Philippians 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20).
 - e) He joyed at the good reports concerning the saints (Colossians 2:5).
 - f) He joyed at the sight of other believers (2 Timothy 1:4).
 - g) He joyed in Philemon's love (Philemon 1:7).
 - b. The desire for the Philippians
 - (1) That they be likeminded, having the same love
 - (2) That they be of one accord, of one mind
 - (3) This was one of the chief desires for the New Testament church (1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Ephesians 4:2-3; Philippians 4:2; Colossians 2:2; 1 Peter 3:8).
 - (4) It is perhaps one of the greatest departures from what the early church enjoyed (Acts 1:14; Acts 2:1; Acts 4:32; Acts 5:12).
 - (5) There is much façade in this area in the modern church, but the only true unity comes when a body of believers takes on the mind of Christ.