

LIVING WORTHY OF THE GOSPEL

Philippians 1:27-2:4

What are Satan's most significant strategies?

How does he distract us from advancing God's kingdom?

Satan's 2 major weapons:

Discouragement

Division

Both of these attacks show up in the church at Philippi
Paul deals with discouragement attack 1st.

To encourage us in hard times, he writes about
JOY.

We listened in on his dialogue with them in his...

Report concerning his imprisonment 12-26

*What's discouraging them,
isn't discouraging him!*

God's at work, using circumstances surrounding his imprisonment for His glory.

We should **CELEBRATE what God is doing!**

Paul wants us to *focus on* **WHAT GOD IS DOING!**

–in the midst of hard times.

[After addressing discouragement, Paul responds to Satan's 2nd
weapon of attack: **division**.]

To resolve conflicts he emphasizes UNITY.

Exhortation to Unity 1:27-2:18

Regardless of what happens to *him*, *we* should
conduct ourselves worthily of the gospel.

Principle of fruit-bearing:

Each tree produces fruit according to its nature.

Orange trees produce oranges;

Lemon tree *doesn't* produce apples!

That isn't its nature!

When we become new crea-tures, it transforms our life.

We produce a different kind of fruit.

When WE become new creatures, because of the gospel, we should conduct ourselves in way that's *WORTHY* of the gospel.

5 imperatives reveal conduct Paul hopes to see develop in us.

What are they?

What do they have in common?

Live in manner that's worthy of the gospel

1:27-30 *"Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come & see you or only hear about you in my absence, I'll know that you stand firm in one Spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel²⁸ without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they'll be destroyed, but that you'll be saved– & that by God.²⁹ For it's been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him,³⁰ since you're going through the same struggle you saw I had, & now hear that I still have."*

Do you sense thought underlying this exhortation?

Life worthy of the Gospel: ***WALK in UNITY!***

Eph. 4:1-3 *"...live a life worthy of the calling you've received...³Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."*

Call to unity isn't just a call to theoretical oneness.

Context affirms suffering of the church at Philippi.

UNITY IN FACE OF EXTERNAL OPPOSITION

In hard times we focus on self-defense

–*“every man for himself!”*

Paul urges God's people, as appropriate response to gospel, to stand together.

We should *unite* to face opposition.

Don't let opposition divide us! *“Divide and conquer!”*

Satan knows that!

He's been working at it for 1000s of years!

If he can use divisions to tear apart God's people, in hard times, you can count on him to do that!

Anytime God's people reach out to our community with the Gospel,

Satan jumps in to tear God's people apart!

God uses it for good,

but Satan will try to use it to destroy us!

Count on him to create discouragement & division, to distract us, & stop what God is doing.

[Therefore, Paul urges us...]

Stand firmly together...

* **United in one spirit.**

* **Striving together for the faith**

* **Not intimidated by opposition.**

Our transformed lifestyle demonstrates that our destiny is different than the people around us.

Our transformed lifestyle, as new creatures, is evidence that they're headed for destruction, but we're destined for life.

Our unity with God's children demonstrates that people looking out for themselves, who have no concern for God's family, are headed for destruction, but we, as part of God's family, are headed toward salvation.

Our confidence in God, when face-to-face with opposition & affliction, is evidence...

–to people seeking to destroy us-that they're headed for destruction

–to us, that God is going to intervene to deliver us.

In the end, **God wins, & we win with Him!**

God has chosen us.

His plan involves *both*:

salvation by trusting Christ

AND suffering!

They go together.

Combination shows that we belong to Him & will ultimately experience His deliverance.

It has been given to us–

–Not only to believe –But also to suffer.

God called US to join in blessing of eternal life, as well as suffering for Jesus' sake.

It's how we respond to suffering, standing together, standing firm in face of opposition & suffering, that we show people watching that we've been *transformed* into new creatures.

We live in a manner that's appropriate for those who've trusted Christ and received the gospel.

We stand firmly together so we can help each other when confronted by opposition.

It's NOT "*every man for Himself.*"

We stand *together*, in *unity*,
to encourage each other.

[This understanding leads to Paul's 2nd exhortation:]

BE OF ONE MIND 2:1-4

We ought to be more concerned for each other than for ourselves & for *our* interests.

Motivation for unity 2:1 "*If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness & compassion...*"

...and you do! 1st class

–Paul ASSUMES it's true!

We are encouraged by being in Christ.

We're one with Him!

We are comforted by God's love

–that's lavished on us!

We do enjoy fellowship with the Spirit.

We enjoy a personal relationship with Him

–He dwells in us.

We partner with Him

–He works through us.

We do experience God's compassion & mercy.

All these are true!

That ought to be enough to make anyone happy!

Only 1 more thing is still needed:

Means (demonstrations) of unity 2:2-4

“Make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit & purpose. ³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴Each of you should look not only to your own interests but also to the interests of others.”

We can finish making Paul happy by...

7 attitudes of people transformed by the gospel:

They're natural outflow of benefits Paul just mentioned we've received as God's children

Members of his family ought to act like family!

Appropriate attitudes for children in healthy family!

As parents, when kids act this way, it delights us!

**In the face of divisions & self-centeredness,
we act like family!**

Stand united

–walking in UNITY!

When we live this way, it delights heart of God

Do these 7 attitudes describe us?

*** Agreeing wholeheartedly with one another.**

Being of one mind

*** Loving one another.**

Having the same love

*** Working together with 1 heart & purpose.**

United in Spirit

United in purpose

- * **Not living selfishly.**
- * **Not foolishly bragging about ourselves.**
- * **Humbly considering others better than self**
Consider each other more important
- * **Not just taking care of what *we* care about, but also what other people care about.**

IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR LIFE

How do WE demonstrate these attitudes toward people around *us*?

How do WE give evidence of the reality of the gospel in *our* lives?

What's our attitude when confronted by people who don't share the same point of view we have?

...when with people who don't have liberty to do things we do?

Are we willing to give up our rights, to avoid hurting others?

Do WE live in manner that's WORTHY of the gospel?