

# Philippians 1:27-28

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 17 May 2026

Preacher: Cody Clickner

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, everybody. Hope you all are well. Thankful that you are here. Go ahead. Grab your copy of God's Word. This morning we are going to primarily be looking at Philippians chapter 1 verses 27 and 28.

So the city of Philippi itself, it gets its name from Philip of Macedonia, who some of you may know as the father of Alexander the Great, who is a very famous historical figure.

The city itself gained notoriety in the ancient world because of a famous battle that was fought there in 42 B.C. when the armies of Antony and Octavian defeated the armies of Brutus and Cassius at the Battle of Philippi.

This battle is significant because after this, the age of the Roman Republic was ended and from there began the age of the Roman Empire.

After the battle, Philippi became a Roman colony, which at the time was incredibly significant because it came with many of the same benefits of being a Roman from Italy, including Roman citizenship, which is something that we'll kind of touch on here in a minute, but at the time would have been a very big deal.

[ 1 : 44 ] So from there, we can also see the story of the beginning of the Church of Philippi, which I think is beneficial for our time this morning in Acts chapter 16.

If you want to turn to Acts chapter 16, go ahead. I'm not going to read it verbatim, but I'm just going to kind of paraphrase it for the sake of time this morning. So in Acts chapter 16, you find the Apostle Paul seeking to go to Asia to preach the gospel, but the scripture tells us that the spirit of Jesus did not allow them to go.

So from there, he ends up in the city of Troas, where in the night he receives his Macedonian call, which was a vision that he had of a man from Macedonia urging him to come to Macedonia to help him.

So Paul has this vision and concludes that God has called him to preach the gospel there. So he immediately goes there in obedience to the Lord.

From the beginning in Acts chapter 16, we can see how God built his church in Philippi in ways that only which God can do.

[ 2 : 53 ] So the first person that we see converted in Philippi is Lydia, who we are told is a seller of purple goods. So in Philippi, there were not enough Jews there to constitute a synagogue.

So Paul finds himself down by the river, rolling up on essentially a women's Bible study, a prayer meeting. And this is where we meet Lydia, right? The Bible tells us that she was a worshiper of God.

And upon hearing Paul's message, we are told that she becomes a believer and is baptized, as well as that of her whole household. From there, Paul spends some time in Philippi.

And the next character that we meet is a slave girl, who we are told is demon-possessed and has a spirit of divination. This spirit of divination gives her this ability that brought her masters much gain. She followed Paul and his companions around the city, proclaiming, These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.

[ 4 : 02 ] So she did this for long enough that, this cracks me up, it says, Paul was greatly annoyed. So he commands the spirit to leave her in the name of Christ, to which the spirit does.

But after this happened, this now creates a problem for the slave girl's masters, because they now have no way to make money from this. So they get angry.

They seize Paul and Silas, and they bring him before the magistrates, accusing them of doing things that are not lawful. So the magistrates and the people there, they attack Paul, they rip his clothes off, they beat him with rods, and then they throw him into prison.

And there we meet our next convert of the Philippian church, the Philippian jailer. So the Philippian jailer, he did not simply just follow the orders that he was given to keep them in the prison, but he throws them into the inner prison and fastens their feet in stocks.

This would have been something incredibly painful, incredibly uncomfortable. And that night, Paul and Silas are praying and singing hymns in prison, which is cool enough as it is.

[ 5 : 13 ] But they're singing and they're praying, and there's a great earthquake. And this earthquake, it is to the magnitude that it causes all of the doors in the prison to open.

It causes all of the stocks to become unfastened. So the jailer wakes up, and he sees what has happened. He sees all the doors of the prison open and assumes that the prisoners have escaped. Now, at that time, the jailer was responsible for ensuring that this did not happen, and often the punishment for failure in his duty would have been death.

So the jailer, he grabs his sword. He's about to go ahead and end his life then and there. But Paul, seeing this about to happen, in verse 28, he cries out to the jailer.

He says, Do not harm yourself. We are all here. The jailer, his response to this is, he falls down before Paul and Silas in fear and says, What must I do to be saved?

From there, they share the gospel with him, and the jailer, along with his entire household, are saved and baptized. So that's the beginning of the Philippian church. These are the cast of characters that we see in Acts chapter 16.

[ 6 : 25 ] You have Lydia, the wealthy seller of purple goods, the formerly demon-possessed slave girl, and the overzealous Philippian jailer. And so these are the people that, along with others, that Paul is writing this letter of Philippians to.

Only God can bring these people together. All right. Now we'll get into Philippians. Chapter 1, verses 27 and 28. It says, Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents.

This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. So the first thing that I want to take a look at is verse 27a.

And in this, we have a command from Paul that he gives the Philippian church in extension to us about how we are called to live. He says, Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ.

So there's a couple things in this text that I think is really important to define to understand what Paul is saying. Some of you in your Bible, you may have a footnote after the phrase manner of life, right?

[ 7 : 47 ] And it says, Only behave as citizens worthy. So the Greek word here for manner of life, forgive me for this, I'm from Hog Mountain. The Greek word here is Pauli, Paulit, you, you, me, again, from Hog Mountain, which the word is the same root word that we get our word politics from.

We see the same word in Philippians 3.20 where Paul says, But our citizenship is in heaven, right? There's not a great English translation to this word, but it carries the idea of living in accord with where our citizenship is.

So this is something that would have resonated with the people of Philippi, because again, as we stated before, their citizenship, their Roman citizenship, was something that would have been incredibly valuable to them.

It would have been something incredibly important, right? So it would have carried weight and expectation. There was ways in which Roman citizens were expected to live. No different than us here.

If I identified myself as an American citizen or said that you are an American citizen, there are some things that would pop up in your mind that say, Oh, well, this is how an American citizen acts, right?

[ 9 : 02 ] The next word I think that is beneficial to define is the word worthy. This is something to which we ascribe worth or value to, and in this case, the utmost worth or value.

And then the last thing that I think is important to define here is the gospel of Christ. So the word gospel literally means good news, and even more specifically, it means the good news that Christ came to save sinners, that we were dead in our sins before a holy and righteous God with no hope of saving ourselves.

We were separated from God, that Christ being fully God humbled himself by taking on human flesh, living a perfect and sinless life, was crucified and died on the cross, being the perfect sacrifice for sin.

He then rose from the dead, defeating sin and death, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father. And us, through faith and believing in this gospel, can receive forgiveness of our sins and now be justified or declared righteous by God and will one day also be raised to live eternally in the presence of God in glorified bodies.

That is the gospel. There is simply no greater news than this. When we talk about the gospel, when we think about the gospel, we should never assume the gospel. We should ensure that we understand what the gospel is, but those two that we are talking to, that they understand what it is when we say the gospel.

[10:29] I like John Piper. He summarized this passage, 127a, and he summarized it like this. He said, the all-encompassing summary of the Christian life is, live as citizens of heaven with the gospel as the center of your all-authoritative heavenly constitution, showing by your life that the gospel is worth more to you than everything else in the world.

So that's the command. That's the command that Paul has given us here. So for me, I read this and this naturally leads to the question, well, how in the world do I do that? Right? That is a huge order. How do I live up to it? Where do I begin? Fortunately, Paul does not leave us guessing, but he follows this by telling us exactly what this looks like.

So look at the rest of the passage with me. It says, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit with one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel and not frightened in anything by your opponents, this is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation and that from God.

So now let's look at how we are called to live out this command. I have four points that I want to consider this morning, but I'm only going to give you the first three. I'm going to go ahead and apologize.

[11:50] I'm not Nathan, so there is no alliteration. Point number one, stand firm. Point number two, strive. Point number three, be fearless.

So point number one, stand firm. What does it mean to stand firm? It means to be resolute and to not change course. What is it as Christians that allows us to do this?

It's our faith. First Corinthians 16, 13, be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. As believers, we can ultimately stand firm because of our unshakable faith in the gospel of Christ that Jesus is who he says he is.

That's what allows us to withstand the forces of the world. It is what allows us to block out the noise of other people, encouraging us to stray from the path that God has set before us.

Does anybody here like watching Western movies? Anybody? I grew up with them. I love them. I used to sit with my dad on Saturday mornings and we would watch the Duke, especially on Christmas.

[12:55] They would have the Duke marathon. But generally, in these movies, you have a main character who is always portrayed as morally good, right? I would watch this and I would always root for this guy.

He would stand in the face of evil to protect someone or something from the bad guy. I always respected these people. They would do the right thing no matter what the consequences were. And inevitably, in every single movie, there's a scene, usually at the end, where they have to stand their ground in front of incredible odds. So now, even with our kids, Lauren and I, we love to give them books with examples of Christian men and women like this, right?

Christian men and women who are standing firm for a higher purpose than John Wayne ever was. They love the story of Eric Liddell, right? I'm sure many of you are aware of Chariots of Fire.

Anybody who ever went through Clay's house back in the day, you've definitely seen this movie a couple times. But Eric Liddell, he refused to compromise on his convictions, right? We love these stories. I put these stories in my kids' hands.

[14:03] I want them to emulate these saints that have gone before them, right? So we've talked about what it means to stand firm and that it's our faith that allows us to stand firm.

So how do we continue to do this as Christians? How do we as Christians do this? So I think about when I was a coach, we used to tell our players all the time that pressure came when we were not

prepared.

So we would spend hours practicing, doing drills, watching film, doing everything we could possibly do to put our players in a position to succeed. So that way, no matter what situation happened in a game, they've seen it before, they've done it before, they're not going to be surprised, right?

They're prepared. So for us as Christians, if we're going to walk faithfully with Christ in a manner worthy of the gospel, we too must be prepared. Paul says in Ephesians 6, verse 1, therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand firm.

Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness and as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

[15:11] In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts for the evil one and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

So to be able to stand firm, we must put on the whole armor of God. We are to immerse ourselves in the truth of God's word and wrap ourselves in it as a belt would have held in a soldier's tunic preparing him for battle.

We are to put on the breastplate of righteousness as our obedience to Christ's commands and our communion with God protects us and our hearts from the schemes of the devil. We are to put on the shoes of the gospel of peace, knowing that we are supported in our walk by the peace that the gospel of Christ gives us.

We are to take up the shield of faith of our, we are to take up the shield of faith in God, knowing that his word and promises are true, extinguishing the flame, flaming darts from the evil one, protecting us from sin and temptation.

We are to put on the helmet of salvation, signifying that we belong to Christ and protecting our minds from doubt. And finally, we are to take up the sword of the spirit, the word of God, to fight and defend against lies and untruths.

[16:20] As Christians, we can stand firm by being prepared for attack and ready to defend. So take up the whole armor of God and be ready to stand firm in the faith. Point number two, strive.

What does it mean to strive? The Greek word here literally means to struggle along with someone. So we'll get to the along with someone part later, spoiler alert. But I just want to talk about for now what it means to strive, right?

Striving means to devote serious energy or effort to something. We cannot be inactive and strive. We cannot be lazy and strive. But what are we to strive for?

It says here that we are to strive for the faith of the gospel and it can be a struggle. Paul, another great example in 2 Corinthians 11, he says, five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one.

Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. A night and a day I was adrift at sea on frequent journeys in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers, in toil and hardship through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure, and apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

[17:44] So this is what a life of struggling, striving for the faith of the gospel looks like. Paul devoted his entire life after his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus to proclaiming the good news of the gospel of Christ, and it came for him with a multitude of hardships.

Now for most of us here in America, we are not going to experience this same level of hardship that Paul experienced, but my point that I'm trying to make is that we are still called to labor regardless if we experience hardship or persecution or not.

We should be actively seeking opportunities to preach the good news of Christ to the lost around us. All of us, whether we go to work every day, we go to school every day, if we're a stay-at-home mom, if we're retired, we're at the grocery store, wherever, we find ourselves in places and have opportunities to be ambassadors for Christ where we are.

But doing this, it requires effort. It takes something from us to go up to a neighbor or a co-worker and engage them in gospel conversation. We have to put ourselves out there.

We have to put our faith out there. We may have to overcome a little bit of anxiety or a little bit of fear. It takes effort and diligence to train up our kids in the way they should go.

[ 18 : 59 ] We may have a couple sleepless nights patiently discipling them, helping them to work through something and pointing them to Christ. Growing up, my dad had a big garden.

I'm sure you guys can probably imagine where I'm going to take this analogy to. But every year, he would spend so much time on it. He would till the soil. He would fertilize the ground. He would plant the seeds. He would water.

He would pull weeds. He would protect it from pests and from birds. And he did this every day. He would be sweaty. He'd have to work. He'd be sweaty. I would be out there with him, sweating right alongside with him.

And I would be doing it thinking, man, I would rather be playing video games right now. Right? This is not fun. This is not enjoyable. This is work. But when it came time to harvest and it came time to eat and that corn was on my plate, I was really thankful for the work that went into it.

It was good. The fruit of the labor was sweet and we got to enjoy it. How much more so for laboring for the faith of the gospel? If we truly understand our position before God apart from Christ, that we have been saved by his grace, we will love others enough to labor for them to know the same peace that we experience.

[ 20 : 13 ] Matthew 9, 36 and 38, when he, meaning Jesus, saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into the harvest. We get to be those laborers. How cool is that? Praise God that he saw fit to use us.

People who received his grace that didn't deserve it to share that gospel of grace with other people. Then as we labor and as we pour into and we invest and we see this thing, hopefully we get to see the fruit of this labor.

We get to see the spiritually deaf receive their hearing, the spiritually blind receive their sight. That's an amazing thing. We get to see that. So yeah, we're commanded, that's part of our call, to live a life worthy of the gospel of Christ.

We are called to strive. So we have stand firm, we have strive. Now point three, be fearless. What does it mean to be fearless? Simply put, it means to be free from fear.

[ 21 : 21 ] Simple enough. Not rocket science. However, I'm sure that even the toughest of us, the biggest, the baddest, the strongest of us, there's something that we are afraid of.

So how can we be freed from that fear? We can be fearless because the truth of the gospel takes away fear. Look up a couple verses in Philippians to verses 20 through 23.

Paul says, as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage, now as always, Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.

For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain, not tell. I'm hard pressed between the two. My desire is to part and be with Christ for that is far better. What can you possibly do to somebody that has this mentality?

Right? You can't touch them. Paul doesn't care if you kill them. Right? His purpose is to proclaim the gospel of Christ because he knows and we know as believers that death brings eternal communion with Christ our Savior and that there's nothing sweeter.

[ 22 : 27 ] Right? Again, if we are found in Christ, we will be raised from the dead to have eternal life with the Father. That's why we can say to live is Christ and to die is gain. Paul, he's not scared of prison either.

Earlier in chapter 1, he actually says that his imprisonment has served to embolden others to speak the word without fear. He sees his own personal time in prison as a service to share the gospel throughout the whole imperial guard and he's celebrating that.

It sounds like a wild way to think in our world today but as Christians, this is the way that we're called to view our own lives. Jesus says in Matthew 10, starting in verse 26, he says, So have no fear of them for nothing is covered that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known.

What I tell you in the dark, say in the light and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops and do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny and not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your father? But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows.

[ 23 : 37 ] So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my father who is in heaven. But whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my father who is in heaven.

So for us to live a manner and a manner worthy of where our true citizenship is, we are to obey our king fearlessly. We can do that because we know that he loves us and cares for us. He knitted us together in our mother's womb. If we do this, we know that Christ will acknowledge us before our father in heaven and we will receive our reward. Again, many of us will not face this level of persecution.

Most of us will not simply run into that. But if we just, even for a moment, consider worst case scenario and we do face that, Paul still has something to say about it.

Verse 28 of Philippians 1, not frightened in anything by your opponents for this is a clear sign to them of their destruction but of your salvation and that from God. So even if we face opposition in the gospel, it's a sign of our opponent's destruction but it is a sign of our salvation from God.

[ 24 : 50 ] Jesus said that a servant is not greater than his master and our master suffered the ultimate sacrifice that we could be set free from sin and death but also from fear as well. Paul says in verse 29 that it has been granted to us that we should suffer for his sake.

It's been granted to us that we should suffer for his sake. It's implying that it's a gift that has been granted to us. Why? Because if we suffer well it brings God glory and that's our purpose.

We are here to glorify the Lord our God. So the fourth point, I didn't give this one to you before, but how is our manner of life worthy of the gospel of Christ?

The last point I want to make is that it is to be in unity with one another. So let's look at our passage again 1.27-28.

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ so that whether I come to see you or I'm absent I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel and not frightening anything by your opponents this is a clear sign to them of their destruction but of your salvation and that from God.

[ 26 : 08 ] So we can see that we're called to stand firm we can see that we're called to strive and we can see that we are called to be fearless however all of those commands are tied together in Christian unity.

How do we do this? Paul talks about this as well a couple verses down in chapter 2 verses 2-5. He says complete my joy by being of the same mind having the same love being in full accord and of one mind do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit but in humility count others more significant than yourselves let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus.

So this is what this is a great picture of what living in Christian unity looks like. The beautiful thing about this unity is that we already have this as Christians. We have this in Christ.

We have divine fellowship with one another through the Holy Spirit. So how do we live this out? We already have it. How do we live this out? The first thing it looks like it looks like humbling ourselves. It looks like looking out for the interests of other people over the interests of ourselves. We have the perfect example of this in this same passage. We left off in verse 5 if we carried it verses 6-8 talking about Jesus who though he was in the form of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death even death on a cross.

[ 27 : 46 ] There's no greater picture of humility that you could possibly find. You have Jesus like creator of the world God right? He humbles himself taking on the human flesh the form of a servant then he humbles himself further by dying being the perfect sacrifice for our sin being satisfying that debt that we could not pay and doing it through crucifixion the most gruesome possible way that a person could be killed.

Like Christ we are called to humble ourselves for the sake of others we are called to genuinely look out for the interests of other people and Paul exemplifies Timothy later in chapter 2 in this same manner he says starting in verse 19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon so that I

too may be cheered by news of you for I have no one like him who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare for they all seek their own interests not those of Jesus Christ but you know Timothy's proven worth how as a son with a father he has served me with the gospel I would love if my name if I was in the Bible that this would and that's what Paul says about Timothy that he was genuinely concerned for the Philippians welfare not like the others who were only worried about their own interests so again this is what we are called to but to do this it requires humility it requires patience it requires bearing with one another in love Ephesians 4 1-7

Paul talks about this as well he says I therefore a prisoner for the Lord urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called with all humility and gentleness with patience bearing with one another in love eager to maintain the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace there is one body and one spirit just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call one Lord one faith one baptism one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all but grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift so all of us in Christ we have the same Father the same Savior we each receive grace as it was given to us in Christ we are part of one body and share in the same spirit we all have the same hope it's hard to imagine that as a Christian I have more in common with a believer in another country from another culture than I do with a family member of mine that is an unbeliever but it's true right if we remember back to how the first couple people we met in the Philippian church the Lydia the seller of purple goods the demon formerly demon possessed slave girl and the overzealous

Philippian jailer they would have had very little in common apart from that bond that they share in Christ right it is that common bond of shared faith and that spirit that unifies them together in Christ to be a part of one body right we know however though that maintaining this unity is not always easy and we actually see an example of that in Philippians chapter 4 right later in the chapter Paul entreats two women to agree in the Lord he says these women labored side by side with him for the gospel he says that their names are written in the book of life but yet he still has to tell them to get along right that is not how I would want my name to be in scripture right let it be said of us that we don't squabble and quarrel amongst ourselves we are called to be unified with one another just as Christ is unified with the Father last scripture for the day from John 17 starting in verse 20

I do not ask for these only but also for those who will believe in me through their word that they may all be one just as you Father are in me and I in you that they also may be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me the glory that you have given me I have given to them that they may be one even as we are one I in them and you in me that they may become perfectly one so that the world may know that you sent me and love them even as you love me so why are we to be unified with one another so that the world may know that the Father sent Christ and loved his people even as the Father has loved Christ how are we to show the world the power of the gospel if we cannot even be unified amongst ourselves we bring glory to God when we show sacrificial love and care for one another and for when we humble ourselves we get opportunities to do this every single day very rarely is someone called to be a lone wolf we are created to live in community with one another so when we are when we are sorry when we are united in Christ we can help one another to stand firm we can labor together for the sake of the kingdom we can encourage one another to be bold and fearless and stand in the face of opposition and in doing these things we live in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ so I'm going to close in just a second but there's just one thing I wanted to say before we do that and what that is is I wanted to commend you all for the way that you guys do this from where I sit or from where I stand

[ 33 : 35 ] I am constantly encouraged by you guys for the way in which you lay down your own interests to love other people my family personally has been served many times by so many of you all and I am incredibly thankful for it right so it's it's beautiful to see a group of people do this so well so my encouragement to you all would be to continue to press into this right continue to bring glory to God to show the world around us by our actions that Christ was sent into the world to save sinners right that Jesus is who he says he is if you would please join me in prayer who he is who he is who he is who he is who he is who he is who he is who he is who he is