

## Philippians, Chapter One, Lesson Five

CHALLENGING THE BRETHREN Philippians 1:27-30

### STIMULATE

\*\* In our study together last week we learned that we could be bold for Christ without any consideration of life and/or death. How does our boldness correspond to that fact that we are "**Dependent on the Brethren**"

1. Our life is supported by prayer. (V.19)
2. Christ should always be exalted in my body, whether by life or death. (V.20)
3. To live is Christ. (V.21)
4. To die is gain. (V.21)
5. My boldness can produce progress and joy in the faith for other believers. (V.25)

\*\* Did anyone have the opportunity to be bold in their faith this past week?

Sometimes our boldness can only be read by the Lord. He knows the level of our commitment and devotion to His truth, even when we do not have a specific opportunity to share with others, God knows what is in our hearts. cf. 1Samuel 16:7

### MOTIVATE

\*\* Today we will see that our circumstances can actually be used by God to increase our boldness for Him. In this first chapter of Paul's letter to the Philippians we have seen that our joy is manifested as we are; "Thankful for the Brethren", "Longing for the Brethren", "Encouraging the Brethren" and "Dependent on the Brethren". That joy can become extremely bold as it is challenged by the furnace of testing provided by God through our circumstances.

As the apostle closes out this first chapter, he is going to be "**Challenging the Brethren**" by showing the relationship between their conduct and their God ordained circumstances. Let's learn together how this all relates to us today and the impact it should have on our daily conduct or walk with the Lord.

Read passage (V.27-28) (V.29-30)

Opening Prayer

### *Challenging the Brethren*

### INVESTIGATE

**V.27** \*\* Paul closed our study last week with the confidence that he would see the Philippians again (V.25). However, what word does he use in the beginning of our passage for today to indicate that there is something even more important to him than their upcoming reunion?

"Only", as Paul shifts from one subject to another, he marks out the importance of the second with this little word - only!

\*\* What is it that would be more important to Paul than seeing his beloved Philippians again?

Their daily conduct, manner of life or walk with the Lord.

\*\* What is the standard of lifestyle to which Paul is calling the Philippians (and us as well)?

"...in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ..."

\*\* Understanding that Paul has already instructed the Philippians here in chapter one regarding how they are to live as Christians, what is he saying to them now?

Don't just hear it, but live it out! cf. James 1:22

\*\* Paul had much to say about a worthy walk, as he wrote to several churches. Some of which, we have seen in our times of study together. Let's remind ourselves of just how important this really is today.

Ephesians 2:10 - "walk...in good works"

Ephesians 4:1-3 - "walk...worthy of your calling"

Colossians 1:9-10 - "walk...worthy of the Lord"

Colossians 2:6-7 - "walk...in Him"

1Thessalonians 2:10-12 - "walk...worthy of God"

\*\* Here in verse 27, what does Paul mean by our conducting our lives "worthy of the gospel of Christ"?

Paul saw his only reason for life and for godliness as being the gospel truth about Jesus Christ.

cf. Romans 1:16 - "not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation"

2Timothy 1:8 & 12 - "do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord"

Live a life that proclaims it in everything!

\*\* Should the fact that Paul was coming to see them, or even if it turned out that he remained absent from them, have any impact on their worthy conduct?

No - either way Paul wants to hear that they were "standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel".

\*\* Paul is addressing their individual commitment to the truth, as well as their corporate commitment. How challenging do you find his request to be, how difficult can it be for a Christian to stand firm on the truth of God's word regarding Jesus Christ?

Extremely! We are tempted and tested on every side!

cf. 2Corinthians 4:7-10, 1Corinthians 9:24-27, 16:13-14, Galatians 5:1

Note: For a comparison of "spirit" pneuma (wind, spirit) and "soul" psuche (breathe, soul) - see 1Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 4:12. Many commentators agree that the two terms speak of one entity, the core of the individual. The terms merely represent two perspectives of the same thing, the "soul" is man's perspective of self, while the "spirit" is God's perspective of who we are - in either case, the body is the container.

\*\* As Christians take their own personal stand, as well as a corporate stand, for what are they striving?

"striving together for the faith of the gospel"

cf. Jude 3 "...the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints..."

That is, the content of truth which describes salvation in Christ and the life which comes out of knowing Him as your personal Lord and Savior.

**V.28** \*\* We know that if we try to stand on our faith, we are going to be opposed by the Satanic world system around us. How will we not react when that opposition comes if we are walking in a manner worthy of Christ?

We will not be "alarmed" by our opponents! For a great example, please join me in  
1Samuel 17:20-50 - David and Goliath

\*\* Now, back in Philippians 1:28 - according to Paul, when Christians display this kind of supernatural courage, it is a two fold sign. What is the first sign manifested by this kind of courage?

It is a sign of destruction for the opponents. With our almighty and gracious God on our side, they have chosen the wrong people to oppose.  
cf. Romans 8:31 "If God is for us, who is against us"?

\*\* What is the second sign, also manifested by our supernatural courage?

Our salvation! Our God has granted us salvation by His grace, and as His children no one can take us out of His hand. cf. John 10:27-30 and 2Corinthians 3:4-5

\*\* From Whom do these two signs come?

From God Himself, giving us a great confidence to accept the many and diverse challenges to living the godly life in this world. Our circumstances should indeed produce a greater boldness, because He is our strength and shield. cf. Psalm 28:6-7

**V.29** \*\* As we observe the apostle "**Challenging the Brethren**" to live godly in an evil world, which is filled with opposition, we can know he was serious because of the two things which have been "granted" to Christians. What are they?

1. To believe in Him (Jesus Christ). cf. Acts 13:48, 2Corinthians 4:3-4 What a privilege!

2. To suffer for His sake. cf. 1Peter 2:20-21 This too is a privilege, because of all that Jesus has done for me, I should be willing to suffer whatever He would send my way for "His name sake".

**V.30** \*\* Paul tells the Philippians that they will be experiencing conflict for the sake of Christ. What two types or examples does he give them?

1. "...which you saw in me..." Right there in Philippi cf. Acts 16:12, 19, 22-25

2. "...and now hear to be in me." They were very much aware of his house arrest, and had sent Epaphroditus to minister to Paul on their behalf. cf. Philippians 2:25, 4:18

## **EXTRICATE**

\*\* How could all of this be used by Paul in his efforts to be "**Challenging the Brethren**"? What was the first thing he used to challenge their lifestyle?

Paul called them to live godly in an evil world, which is filled with opposition. They were going to have to determine within their own hearts that they would strive each day to "walk in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ".

\*\* What did Paul add to the challenge of trying to live godly for Christ's sake?

We must live godly - knowing all the time that we will suffer, because we have come to believe in the One who gave His life for us.

### **DELINEATE**

\*\* What types of suffering did Paul have to endure for the sake of Jesus Christ, and how much of it might we expect today?

cf. 2Corinthians 11:23-28

Labors, imprisonments, beatings, danger of death, "39" lashes, beaten with rods, stoned, shipwrecked, dangers from; journeys, robbers, countrymen, Gentiles, the city, the wilderness, the sea, false brethren. He often went without food or water in cold and exposure. In addition to all of that, he had a "daily pressure" of concern for all the churches.

### **EVALUATE**

\*\* How easily do we complain when things do not go our way? When we think that life has handed us a challenge that is just too big, or just too inconvenient - how do we respond?

Ours must be the prepared heart that will accept the challenge and walk in a manner worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ, for His name sake!

### **ACTIVATE**

\*\* Let's ask the Lord to keep us mindful of this marvelous challenge placed before the Philippian believers in our passage for today and to be willing to embrace it as our own.

Closing prayer