

Phil. 1:27 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,

1:28 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.

1:29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

1:30 having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.

[From today's sermon.

Paul said, "To leave this world and to be with Christ...in fact, it is far preferable," but "But it is more necessary for you that you remain in the body. I will live and remain with you all, that I may advance your faith and your joy. I will come to you again. Paul said with confidence, "I will come to you again.

What made Paul so strong and kept him going as a man of love?

Paul was a man of love, and he was a man of love. ...that you...may be of one mind, fighting together for the faith of the gospel..." It was the gospel, the good news of God, Jesus Christ, that brought him to that point. He was attracted to Jesus, and his life was transformed by this good news.

But there were hostile people there, both within and without. There were times when he was dismayed, intimidated, and almost flinching. But to believe in Christ Jesus, he says, is to be given the gift of suffering.

No matter how powerful and apparently vanquished the opposing forces may seem to be in everyone's eyes, it is a sign of their destruction and a sign of our salvation. God will do it. We are always partakers of the resurrection along with the suffering of Christ.

Good morning everyone, September has finally come to a close. It is still summer heat during the daytime, but it is finally a sign that the weather will cool down next week. Please take care of yourselves.

Now, we conclude Philippians chapter 1.

In the previous passage, we were told of Paul's anguish.

1:15 On the one hand there are those who preach Christ out of envy and strife, and on the other hand there are those who do so out of good will.

1:16 The latter know that I am set up to plead the gospel, and preach Christ out of love,  
1:17 The former do not do so out of a pure heart, but out of partisanship, thinking to add  
more tribulation to the sufferings of my entrance into prison.

Even among those who preached Christ, in the church family, and in the fellowship of the church, envy, strife, and partisanship infested them. There was also the battle against heresy and, outside, the battle against Judaism, which had imprisoned him in this way. There were opposing forces both within and without, adding to the suffering of his imprisonment. Finally, he expressed his feelings, "My desire is to leave this world and be with Christ, and in fact, that would be far preferable.

1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

1:22 But if living in the flesh is a fruitful work for me, I do not know which I should choose.

1:23 I am in a dilemma between these two things. My desire would be to leave this world and be with Christ, and in fact, that would be far preferable.

But this was not his point. It goes on to say that even though his earnest desire is deep in his heart, his true feelings are stronger than that.

1:23 I am in a dilemma between these two things. My desire is to leave this world and be with Christ, and in fact, that is far preferable.

1:24 But to remain in the flesh is even more necessary for you.

(New Common Translation) 1:23 We are caught between these two things. On the one hand, I am eager to leave this world and be with Christ, and this is much more desirable.

He goes on to say that it is even more necessary, that I remain in the flesh and be with you and be for you. There is no boardroom of any kind here, no hesitation of not knowing which way to choose.

1:24 But it is even more necessary for you that you remain in the body.

1:25 Being thus convinced, I will live and remain with you all, that I may advance your faith and your joy.

1:26 Then I will come to you again...

This sentence shows how Paul is willing to put aside his own thoughts and choose one path because of Christ. He certainly has a desire for his own peace. He also has a longing for rest and a certain amount of hesitation. But even more than that, even more than his own desire, he is convinced that for your sake it is more necessary for him to remain in his body than it is for his own desire, and even more than it is desirable. I will advance your faith and make you rejoice in it. I will come to you again.

How could he put himself aside to serve his brothers and sisters in the church so fervently? That is what today's verse says.

1:27 Only live your lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. And whether I go and meet you or whether I am far off, stand fast in one spirit, and fight together for the faith of the gospel, being of one mind,

1:28 And let them hear how ye stand fast in one spirit, and fight together for the faith of the gospel with one mind, and are not moved by your adversaries in any matter. This is a sign of destruction to them and a sign of salvation to you, which comes from God.

Verses 27-28 are a single sentence in Greek.

Live, live your life, conduct yourself, only live up to the gospel of Christ.

I want to hear that you fight together in the faith of the gospel, in spirit and in mind, in the depths of your hearts and in the life of your bodies; that you stand firm and fight. As for those who oppose you, fear nothing at all. But you have the sign of God's salvation, so live a life worthy of the gospel and fight together with a firm heart because of the faith of the gospel, Paul says.

When I read this passage, I think about how much we have been hindered and distracted in the past from living the gospel, and how much work there is to hinder us from fighting for the gospel with our hearts and spirits together. It is done in such a way that it is unnerving, threatening, and instills fear. The Bible tells us that it is not just laziness or a half-hearted attempt to distract us by dangling something of value in front of us, but a way to make us fearful so that we will not be of one mind and fight for the gospel.

Fear grows day by day, and we flee for our lives when we remember that we are in danger.

Even though we have made a firm decision to go forward with our lives in the Spirit of God, there is a force at work that prevents us from living a life worthy of the gospel, driving us to fear and dread and anxiety about the future in order to destroy that decision. This is the work of the adversaries.

But here is the help that comes from God.

1:28 And let them hear how we do not allow our adversaries to cause us to be disobedient in any matter. This is a sign of destruction to them and a sign of salvation to you, which comes from God.

God will crush the hostile forces and bring about thorough desolation and destruction. He gives us guidance without fear, and tells those who fight for the faith that they can help one another with patience and unity of mind, and live rooted in the gospel, that is, the sign of salvation.

The gospel is good news, but what makes it good news is that God sent His Son for salvation to this sinful world that has lost its way to salvation. His Son was persecuted, crucified, died, and buried, but that was the sign of redemptive salvation for us. As in Isaiah 53, the sign of our salvation was that we would go forth in silence like sheep to the slaughter, and that our lives would end. Therefore, even if persecution and difficulties follow us, we have nothing to fear, as if something amazing and unexpected has happened to us. We are connected to Christ, which means that we are living up to the Gospel, and we are connected to life and salvation by suffering with Him. While it is a blessing for us to be saved from all troubles, pains, and difficulties immediately on earth, it is not always the case when it comes to living a life worthy of the gospel.

1:29 For you have been gifted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake.

1:30 And ye continue in the same struggle, which ye have seen of me before, and which ye hear of me now.

What we have been endowed with for Christ's sake, who we are endowed to go on with Christ Jesus, the Benefactor of our life, is the gift of suffering along with our works of believing in him and the life we live for the purpose of believing in him.

We have been informed of Paul's suffering in prison as he devoted himself to serve, giving up his own future, but we have also been given the same struggle, the struggle to struggle, to fight, to struggle, to fight, to fight, to be hostile, to worry, to be anxious, to have many concerns, to be always being chased and competing, to be in a never-ending battle. The Bible tells us that we are also gifted with a never-ending battle.

That is what it means to live a life worthy of the Gospel. It is a life that is forced in some way that is different from our desires, but it is in this life that the signs of salvation shine.

The important thing is that we are united in spirit and in mind to fight for the good news that Jesus has given us. There will be suffering, but there will be no fear.

God's gift to us is suffering along with the life of believing. Belief does not just lead to rest, but belief leads to suffering. Can we accept that?

For this, Jesus and Paul and other predecessors in the faith are our role models. The suffering we are undergoing is not ours alone, but has already been passed by those who came before us in the faith.

Please do not be dismayed, flinch, or fearful, but face the suffering that comes with faith, and realize that it is our life that is worthy of the gospel and of the suffering of Christ. Let us stand firm with one mind and one heart, and whatever difficult circumstances we find ourselves in, let us go forward with joy in our hearts, knowing that those who oppose us for the sake of the gospel and the hardships they are suffering are a sign of our salvation.

Prayer; Heavenly Father, thank you for today's worship. Thank you for protecting and advancing us in the gospel of Christ, the good news in Christ. God's salvation is always at work in us, even in the midst of the battle to believe in this gospel, so that we do not fear anyone. To believe in Christ is to suffer for His sake. When what we see and hear about Paul comes to us, we ask God to take away our fear and keep us in salvation. Please guide all sufferers into God's salvation and peace. Bless our families and the people in our community. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.