

The Book of Philippians

[Sun. Oct. 5, 2014] Philippians Series, Phl. 4.8-9 - Craig A. Thurman

In Scripture there are two instances where we are commanded to stand fast. First, we are to *stand fast* whether we have the presence or absence of those on whom we have depended ... Continue to *stand fast*.

1Co.16.7-13 *stand fast in the faith*, (doctrinal; a waffling Christian vacillates between preference and conviction, back and forth. One day he believes this, then next day he's not sure. When once we have been taught the truth, believe it and stand there);

Phl.1.27, 28a *stand fast in one spirit*, (practical).

And second, we are to take *defensive* positions against false teachers and their teachings.

Gal.5.1 *stand fast ... in the liberty*;

Phl.4.1 *stand fast in the Lord* against the *dogs, evil workers, and the concision*);

2Thes. 2.15 *stand fast and hold the traditions* (Therefore relates to being deceived about the about the coming *day of the Lord*; ordinances, 1Co.11.2 the doctrinal and practical instructions) *which ye have been taught ... by word or our epistle*.

Clearly there is no standing fast if we have doctrinal or practical error, and **we cannot stand fast in the faith, in one spirit, in the Lord, when we are divided**, whether in ourselves or with others of those with whom we should be in union.

Am 3:3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

1Co.1.12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

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Lk.11.17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

Two in the church at Philippi needed to be reconciled. Paul, the apostle tells us that they were not of the same mind in the Lord. He proceeds with the writing of the epistle as if it is a *given* that these sisters-in-the-Lord shall resolve the matter promptly. It is certainly understood that it *should be resolved*.

2Th 3:4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

Divisions will arise. The point is, we are all commanded to resolve them. Christians will be moved continually by the Lord to have all such matters fixed.

From the context of this reconciliation the church at Philippi then receives instruction about how to keep themselves in a proper mode of gospel service. Rejoice in the Lord always; all that knew them should have been aware of their Christian moderation (calm, gentle demeanor, not a natural, but a spiritual nature, for Christ's sake); continue in prayer with thanksgiving to God; and the result shall be that the peace of God shall keep their hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Doubtless, that is what every Christian desires; the peace of God overruling, directing, controlling, having the preeminence in our thoughts and emotions. The Holy Spirit is directing us through this brother in the Lord, Paul, to live to 'think' in such a way, to lay out a habit of life so that when we face opposition, and we shall, that we can continue faithful through the immediate 'pain' and until we reach the good side of a bad experience. Brethren, there is guaranteed on the other side of all the evils, and of all of the pain, the abuses, the scoffing, the mocking, the reviling, the goodness of the Lord. That is powerful! But the only way to discover it is to be faithful and go through it according to the truth of the Word of God. It is not happenstance, it is our purpose. This speaks of conviction, dedication to the Lord.

Pr 25:28 He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.

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But he would have us to be as this one:

Isa 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Is.41.8 But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

9 Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.

10 ¶ Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. (Amazing it is, that the God of glory has to make no compromise whatsoever to assist one of His people when they have any need. He can reach us with the power of His might and render aid in every circumstance.)

Paul now begins to close the letter to the Philippians

Verses 8, 9 is Paul's summary statement.

8 Finally,

Τὸ λοιπόν; same as chapter 3. Chapter three was to close a number of thoughts that had been brought up in the preceding chapter. Here the letter will begin its closing remarks. Clearly, he is not considering what is behind, but introduces new and necessary thoughts for them to consider.

brethren, whatsoever (How comprehensive, yet limited a term this is!)

*Jn.4.39 ... He told me all **that ever** I did. (In those few moments the Lord Jesus had summed up her life that she was living then when the Lord found her.)*

*Jn.1.12 But **as many as** received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

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*Acts 2.39 ... the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even **as many as** the Lord our God shall call.*

ὅσα; nom & acc pl, neu of ὅσος; in order of occurrence in the KJV
whatsoever, that, what, how great, all, which, how much, all that, how many, those things.

things are

What follows is a listing of eight terms (six adjectives and two nouns) which we are directed to *reason on*. This is an imperative, a commandment. (vs.8) We are commanded to have this *rationale*, λογίζεσθε. Unlike the *thinking* or *mind*ing we have considered earlier, which was φρονέω, the things that we tend mind to through the course of the day. (2.2, 5; 3.15, 16, 19; 4.7) We are to change the *reasoning* process so that when we tend to thoughts they have an edifying property to them. Otherwise our *reasonings* are enwrapped in carnality, and I should say that this is the easiest, default way of thinking for us, instead of being spiritually reasoning and therefore spiritually minded. This is important. If we, as the children of God, are to be changed it must take place first in our minds. This is where we really win or lose our battles. Not when the fight actually takes place. The fight itself actually proves our hearts. I cannot say to what extent we think in our sleep, but it doesn't take a scientist to figure this out: in our waking ours we never cease thinking. It is an impossibility. We cannot not think.

So in our *reasoning* we need to direct our minds to consider applying these adjectives to the things we tend to in our minds day by day. We are what we think! Therefore we must change *how* we think.

Mt.15.18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies ...

Pr.23.6 ¶ Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:

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7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.

8 The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words. (cf. Ja.3.5, 6, 8-12, 14, 15)

Paul went through a lot of terrible experiences. One of those very difficult times was in the city of Philippi. He didn't focus on those things. Why not? Because he had learned to adopt this pattern of rationale to his mind. He saw saints of God being changed, step by step. And he joyed greatly in them. He was truly *joyful* for their *fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now*. (Phl.1. 4, 5)

Php 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ ...

true,

ἀληθῆ; nom & acc pl, neu of ἀληθείς.

ἀληθη

*Joh 10:41 ... but all things that John spake of this man were **true**.*

*Joh 19:35 ... and he knoweth that he saith **true**, that ye might believe.*

*1Pe 5:12 this is the **true** grace of God wherein ye stand.*

The Master and Lord, Jesus Christ is true, and in Him is no lie. (Mt.22.16; Mk.12.14; Jn.7.18; Re.3.7; 19.11) God us true. (Jn.3.33; 1Thes.1.9) The witness that our Lord gave was true. (Jn.5.31; Re.3.14) The judgment of Jesus Christ is true. (Jn.8.16; Re.19.2, 9) Our Heavenly Father is true. (Jn.8.26) God is true. (Ro.3.4) The apostles were the true ministers of Christ. (2Co.6.8) Certain tested testimonies are true. (Tit.1.13; 3Jn.12) The grace of God is true. (1Pe.5.12) There are true proverbs. (2Pe.2.22) The new commandment is true. (1Jn.1.8) There is a true light. (Jn.1.9; 1Jn.1.8) Our anointing by the Holy Spirit is true. (1Jn.2.27) There are true riches. (Lk.16.11) The things of glory are true. (He.9.24) We are to have a true heart. (He.10.22) There is a true way. (Re.15.3) The Word of Jesus Christ is true. (Re.21.5; 22.6)

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True speak of that which is real and eternal. We must realize that most that is in the world is counterfeit and temporal. Such counterfeits serve only to waste our time, divert our attention from goal; walking with our Lord Jesus Christ. Whatsoever things are *true* ... think on these things.

whatsoever things are honest,

σεμνά; nom, pl, neu of σεμνός; root σέβομαι; σεμνός, only found in 1Ti.3.8 *grave* deacons, 11 *grave* deacon wives; Tit.2.2 aged men be *grave*; σεμνότης only found in 1Ti.2.2 honesty; 3.4; Tit.2.7 *gravity*.

root σέβομαι, we have *worship* and *devout*.

σεμνός, LXX Pv.6.8 of the bees' honey ... desired and *respected* by all; 8.6 I will speak *solemn* [truths]; 15.26 the sayings of the pure are held in *honour*.

The meaning is to consider things that are worthy of our *regard*; things that are *respectable*, *dignified*, and *serious*. Some people, brethren sometimes, want to laugh and joke their way through the day. Don't misunderstand me here, I love a good laugh. But if our fellowship involves ceaseless jokes and laughter there is something amiss. There are many serious matters which requires our attention. We must face *reality*. And this is that time. Whatsoever things are of honest.

Talking to a professed believer of Jesus Christ some time ago has proved to be somewhat difficult. While trying to discover how he was, what he had been doing, and his plans for the future he would, as best I could tell, uncontrollably giggle and laugh. This is sometimes an indication of some sort of substance abuse. Having met this young man one morning it does appear he is involved in some illegal activities. This is foolishness and in this sphere of live nothing is honest. Nothing in it promotes good, honest, wholesome thinking. We are to learn to judge what things should have our *notice*, and those things and people which are respectable, dignified, and serious we should *think on these things*.

whatsoever things are just,

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δίκαια; nom, pl, neu of δίκαιος;

δίκαια

*Joh 5:30 and my judgment is **just** ...*

*Ro 7:12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and **just**, and good.*

*1Jo 3:12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's **righteous**.*

When we consider things that are just or righteous we consider things that are

upright in character (Mt.1.19 Joseph was a **just** man; Lk.23.50 Joseph of Arimathaea);

fair in dealings (Mt.20.4 the master would give whatsoever was **right**);

innocent (Mt.23.35 called the **righteous** blood shed);

impeccable (Mk.2.17 came not to call the **righteous**; Mt.27.24 innocent of the blood of this just person ... **nothing is wrong** in this man to warrant his execution);

without fault (Ro.3.10 none **righteous**, no not one);

proper (2Thes.1.5 speaks of the **righteous** judgment of God);

perfect standard (1Pe.3.12 eyes of the Lord are over the righteous);

straight, without ambivalence, not perverse or crooked (1Jn.1.9 faithful and **just** to forgive sin).

whatsoever things are pure,

ἀγνά; nom, pl, neu of ἀγνός; Used eight times in the N.T. KJV; *2Co.7.11 to be **clear** in this matter (no complicity in evil, uninvolved); 11.2 present you as a **chaste** virgin (in body); 1Ti.5.22 keep thyself **pure** (impartial in judgment); Tit.2.5 discreet, **chaste**, keeps at home (chaste in conduct); Ja.3.17 from above is first **pure** (undiluted with the world); 1Pe.3.2 behold your **chaste** conversation; 1Jn.3.3 purifieth himself, even as he is **pure**. To be without imperfection, impurity, clear, bright, light, white. In Revelation*

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the word pure (καθαρός) is through a process of proving or testing. Here this concerns the present state of a thing; be pure, chaste, and clear.

whatsoever things are lovely, (with love, according to love)

προσφιλή; nom, pl, neu of προσφιλής; only time used in the N.T.; πρὸς unto, with, according, against, for + φίλος call this a fraternal love, or one that is sandwiched between *flesh* and *spirit*; things of this sort will promote a level of passion that does not detract from the things of God. Such arouses a gratitude to Him.

Ever take a moment to behold the sunset, look at a blade of grass, a beautiful flower, perhaps after a rain shower; perhaps enjoy watching brethren where the sense of the moment just grabs your attention where all is at peace, they are hard at work, the words of every one of them are agreeable. To me that is lovely. Or, watching children play, not a care in the world; the notable love between a husband and wife, when you see them communicate without a word being spoken in the middle of a crowd, whether it's the smile, the eye. I think that is lovely. A good fire in the woodstove on a cold, cold Alaskan morning makes me very awed at how the Lord ordained all of this in such a way that it works. I like that a lot! φίλος, philos, this love isn't low, base and defiled; it is the love of *fellowship, camaraderie*. While we are to *love, ἀγαπή*, one another, have a singular, devoted, sacrificial love for one another, we are there is we haven't arrived to the love of φίλος yet. Lovely is that special place somewhere between heaven and earth where the saints can go and be warmed in their hearts about good things; lovely things.

whatsoever things are of good report;

εὐφημα; nom, pl, neu of εὐφημος; only time this adjective is used in the N.T.; εὖ well + φήμη KJV *fame* or φημί KJV *said*; thus εὐφημος *to say well*. From this is the Greek εὐφροσύνη, euphrosyne, from which we have the English word euphemism. Good fame, good sayings; as opposed to an evil report.

Four of the eight things under consideration are found here:

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2Co.6.4 *But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses ...*

... pureness ... by the armour of righteousness ...

8 *By honour and dishonour, by evil report δυσφημίας and good report εὐφημίας: as deceivers, and yet true ...*

δυσφημίας, the noun; the inseparable particle δυσ (Harold Moulton) 'conveying the notion of untowardness, as *hard, ill, unlucky, dangerous*, like the English *un-, mis-*; opp. to εὐ.' Find used in Acts 28.8 *bloody flux ... dysentery δυσεντερία*; He.5.11, *δυσερμήνευτος, hard to be uttered ...* or interpreted; (cf. Mt.19.23 *shall hardly*; Mt.23.4; Mk.10.24 *hard*; Lk. 11.46 *grievous to be borne*; 2Pe.3.16 *hard to be understood*)

There have a couple of instances in my life when someone comes our way who always has an *evil report*. One was a professed believer in Christ, yet the things that he said was so contrary to that profession. He always have some new story to tell or some off-colored joke to tell.

if εἴ there be any virtue,

ἀρετῆ; focus on excellent qualities that are found in God's people, and excellent works that they do. These are the *praise-worthy* things. Such things need our serious attention. There are plenty of things to think about otherwise. We need to find such and reason of these things.

1Pe 2:9 *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye **should** shew forth ἐξαγγείλητε the **praises** (ἀρετάς, KJV margin: the virtues) of him (referring to God) who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light ...*

ἐξαγγείλητε, 2nd p pl, aor 1, **subj** of ;ἐξαγγέλλω, (only time used in the N.T.) lit. that **we ought tell out the excellencies** (all of the wonderful things) of God by Lord Jesus Christ.

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2Pe.1.2 *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,*

3 *According as his divine power θείας δυνάμεως hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness εὐσέβειαν, through διὰ the knowledge of him that hath called us to διὰ glory and virtue (or through his show of glory and virtue in Christ. What we see in Christ we are called to the same kind of life):*

4 *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

5 ¶ *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith **virtue** ἀρετήν; and to **virtue** ἀρετή knowledge ...*

Virtue is that praise-worthy, excellent character that we can reason of and be helped in our walk. Even the dictionary calls this moral excellence.

and if there be any praise,

ἔπαινος; noun; ἐπί upon, among, for + αἶνος only twice, both *praise* (Mt.21.16; Lk.18.43); Always translated *praise*, 11 times; **The word means to put praise upon;**

Eph.1.6, 12, 14, What the Heavenly Father has done for us through His Son elevated his grace with *praise*, or put praise upon his grace; What the Father has done through saving the elect Jews and Gentiles by Jesus Christ *praises* His glory, or puts praise upon His glory. We **should** live our lives in that way. *That we should be to the praise of his glory. (vs.12) ...*

Phl.1.9 ¶ And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

10 *That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;*

11 *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise ἔπαινον of God.*

think

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λογίζεσθε, 2nd p pl, pres, imper of λογίζομαι; Mk.13.11 *reasoned*; 15.28 *numbered*; Lk.22.37 *reckoned*; Acts 19.27 *counted*; Ro.2.3 *thinkest*; 3.28 *conclude*; 4.6 *imputeth*; 8.36 *account*; 2Co.11.5 *suppose*.

As one is famous for saying, 'Make it so!'

*1Co 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? **But we have the mind of Christ.***

[on] *these things* ταῦτα.

Again, true things – honest things – just things – pure things – lovely things – things of good report; if there be any [things of] virtue – [things of] praise ... think on these.

9 Those things,

Those things ... do ...

which ye have both learned,

ἐμάθετε; aor. 2; root μανθάνω;

This is what we derive from parables, lessons, and especially from the examples of others; 1Co.4.6; Gal.3.2 *This only would I learn of you ...*; Eph. 4.20 *but ye have not so learned Christ*; **Phi.4.11 I have learned**; 2Ti.3.7 *Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*; Tit.3.14 *And let our also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.*

and received, λάβετε aor. 2 and heard, ἠκούσατε aor.1 and seen εἶδετε aor. 2 in ἐν me, do:

πράσσετε; 2nd p pl, pres, imper, act πρῶσω; ;

This precise verb is only used here:

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*Lu 3:13 And he said unto them, **Exact** πράσσετε no more than that which is appointed you.*

If I might be able to say this, *Exact this from me.* If you have learned from my letter, received as equally agreeable to the things of Jesus Christ, seen in my life, that has confirmed this reasoning *do.*

and the God of peace εἰρήνης shall be with μεθ̅ you.

Not only will he keep our hearts and minds in Christ, but, brethren consider this: He shall be with us. He who shall keep our hearts and minds **in** Christ Jesus shall be with us. When we abide in Him He abides in us. John 15, the chapter concerning The Vine, Our Lord Jesus Christ, is our admonition to abide in Him, yet it never says that He is not abiding in us, but rather it only says that, *vs.4 Abide in me, and I in you ...; He that abideth in me, and I in Him ...; If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you ...* It is not that He ceases to be with His people at any time (*I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. (Mt.28.20)*), but we shall not have the sense of His presence as we **ought** when we do not walk according to the truth of the Word of God, or in sin. We cannot know if we are walking in ignorance; and we will not know when we walk in sin. And Paul is showing us that we, every one that is called by His name, **can** walk in such a way that we can know that He is *with* us.