

Philippians 1:27-30
Worthy of the Gospel

Gripped by the Gospel ...

I. Under Christ

- A. All Sufficient Grace
- B. Standards of Conduct

II. Unified in Faith

- A. One Spirit
- B. Striving Together

III. Unafraid of Opposition

- A. Suffering as a Grace
- B. Opposing Signs

... unworthy servants.

Children, Listen ...

1. What does the statement "salvation is a gift from God" say to you?
2. Are Christians expected by God to live a certain way even though they are saved by grace?
3. We serve one God in our church. What does that say about the way we should work together as a church?
4. Why don't God's people have to fear when people treat them badly?
5. Should people who treat God's people badly be concerned about meeting God? Why?

A Worthy Witness

Salvation is all of grace through the work of Jesus Christ. We can't add to or take away from what the Lord has done to secure our standing in His Kingdom. But that does not mean that there are no standards of conduct for Christians. Paul uses a word that suggests "behavior of a citizen" where most English versions simply translate it along the lines of "manner of life." Citizens of God's Kingdom are called to a standard of life that is different than that of the world. Paul describes it as "worthy of the Gospel of Christ. There are many aspects to godly living, but in this section the apostle highlights two in his address to the Philippians. Unity in the body and fearlessness in the face of opposition. The first reminds us that we serve one God, seek to advance His kingdom, and that we are to work together "side by side" to accomplish all that the Lord has called us to do. The second one reminds us that, though the church is bound to face opposition from the world, we are not to fear. Amazingly Paul describes the believer's suffering as something God grants to His people – it is an honor to be considered worthy to suffer for the sake of Christ. These two things are not just "in house" issues the body of Christ must deal with, they are both means of testifying to the world around us that we are the Lord's. The unified church not only has a vision for the Kingdom and allows us to get things done well, the very harmony we enjoy it a witness to the world around us. Division on the other hand has the opposite effect. The fearless suffering of God's people also bears witness to the world: it assures us by validating our salvation, but it also confirms the persecutor's destruction. But the way Christians handle opposition in light of that speaks volumes of grace and displays confidence in the living God to Whom they belong. Through both God is glorified and by the witness of both people can be drawn to Christ. May God grant our church the grace to be witnesses for Him by being one in Spirit and unified in effort – and by fearlessly standing firm on the truth no matter what comes to pass.