

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Date 5th March 2023

Preacher Rev Philip Knowles Hymns Ps 57v1-5 T Martyrdom, 270 539, 540 Read: Philippians 1:27-30, Text Philippians 1:27

Series: Philippians (37) Title: The Gospel Citizen's stand

In the last section of Philippians 1, Paul is dealing with Kingdom living on earth, that is how the citizens of heaven live on earth glorifying God.

Paul said in **verse 27** *Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;*

The word **conversation** is the word meaning ***conduct, behaviour, manner of living***, but from this root word comes the meaning ***citizenship***.

The same word is used by Paul in **Philippians 3:20** ***“For our conversation is in heaven; or citizenship, is in heaven.***

The word ***becometh*** means ***worthy, in a manner worthy of.***

It gives **the idea of equation that which is equal, that which matches, adds up, or identical.**

When the words and meanings are connected together, Paul is exhorting the saints at Philippi, that though they are citizens of Rome,

yet their true citizenship is spiritual in nature, it is heavenly and eternal,

therefore when living as citizens of the gospel their behaviour in the gospel must match, or be in agreement with their belief in the

gospel, how they live the gospel must match the message of the gospel, when in the company of other Christians, or not.

Paul says if I'm present with you or not, you will still live out the gospel. that you will not act one way when I'm present or another way when I'm absent.

The reason why Paul's words are important, because of what follows comes next, ***that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;***

In other words, in my absence you will continually live out the gospel by standing firm in the message of the gospel together, that you will labour together.

The same with our children, we instruct them in the gospel through their lives to live the gospel whether you are with them or not.

Therefore, you have one another to serve and fellowship with, stand together for the cause of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

United we stand, divided we fall.

stand fast in one spirit...for the faith of the gospel;

I FRIST, THE GOSPEL CITIZENS STAND.

At this time, we will only consider the phrase "***that ye stand fast...***"

The words **stand fast**, are the translation of one word in the Greek text, meaning **stand firm**.

It means to hold your ground and don't move even in the face of opposition, danger or oppression. Hold on, stand fast, stand firm.

Its clear from the language of **verse 28** in nothing ***terrified by your adversaries***, the Philippians had opposition to the gospel, because the word **adversaries** means, ***to oppose, to resist***.

Philippians 3:18 *“(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:*

Off course from the time Paul and the missionary team first preached the gospel at Philippi, there was uproar and opposition.

Acts 16:20 *“these men being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city.”*

The words **exceedingly trouble**, are one word in the original it means **to agitate, to get on ones nerves, to stir up, disturb.**

Nothing had changed, the saints at Philippi were still being opposed by the enemies of the gospel seeking **to silence the preaching of the gospel,**

to pervert the truth of the gospel,

to compromise the ways of the gospel,

and to stop the advancement of the gospel.

To this Paul counsels stand fast, stand firm as gospel citizens on earth.

We must Consider Christ the humble, meek and lowly one, yet Christ stood firm in the gospel.

Read His sermons in Matthew’s gospel, hear Him say to compromising religious leaders, the words Wow unto you hypocrites.

He said to His Disciples in **Mark 1:38** *“Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.*

As the prophet of God, He preached His priestly sacrifice and Kingly rule in their hearts of sinners He saves.

When it came to the gospel Christ stood strong, He preached and warned in **Luke 13:3**, ***except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish***, He repeated it in **verse 5**.

Therefore, citizen's of heaven, stand fast in the gospel because Christ stood fast in the gospel.

1 The cause of the gospel citizens stand.

Did you notice how Paul starts and ends this words, "***Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ... for the faith of the gospel.***

In a short space of words Paul uses the word **gospel** twice.

First in living the gospel, and then in standing for the gospel ***for the faith of the gospel.***

The cause of the gospel citizens stand, is to remain firm in the central message of the gospel which is justification, the full and perfect pardon of sinners declared by God in grace, only through faith in Christ's virtuous person and vicarious death.

By Sovereign grace the sinner now justified, pardoned has a new legal standing before God.

No longer legally condemned by God, rather fully acquitted, pardoned by God upon the blood of Christ.

The message of Justification, the complete forgiveness of sins, centres upon all who Christ is, as the sinless Saviour, and all that Christ has done as the sufficient Saviour.

In fact Paul gave the same instruction to the churches at Galatia who came under attack also from Judaism, when religious Jews presented a false gospel, that justification was both a mixture of faith in Christ and faith in religious work.

Paul said in **Galatians 5:1** ***Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.***

Spiritual liberty or freedom, is not ability to do what we want to do, go where we want to go and, and live how we please to.

Spiritual freedom is not saying I'm a free to serve the Lord, but I chose not to. Spiritual liberty is not saying since all my sins are forgiven, I am free to sin.

Remember as gospel citizens ***Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ...for the faith of the gospel.***

Paul said **Gal 5:13** ***“use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh.”*** The word **occasion** means ***a starting point.***

Don't allow the fact that your sins are forgiven to be a starting point to sin as you please, live as you desire.

in fact such thinking would confirm one, not to be saved at all.

By these words Paul shows the spiritual liberty, or freedom that we have in our justification is not freedom to serve the flesh, enjoy, engage and entertain the lusts of the world, in terms of fleshly lusts and sinful habits, that war against the believer.

Spiritually liberty is not a licence to sin

Rather Christian liberty is freedom from having to think we must work our way to heaven. Christ has made redeemed sinners free.

Therefore, when you hear another gospel, another way of justification, another way to live the Christian life, then stand fast, stand your ground, upon the basis of the gospel.

Stand fast in what the gospel is, stand firm in the message of the gospel, because to them who believe, the gospel is the power of God.

2 The command of the gospel citizens stand.

The words **stand fast** are in an **imperative**, that means **a command, a responsibility to be carried out.**

To Stand fast and firm in the gospel, is to be as a tree rooted deep in the ground, or that post cemented into the ground, where you become strong, unmovable, unbendable, unshakeable, unbreakable in the truth of the gospel.

The adversaries will come against you as the philistines did to David, but do not give way, do not retreat, do not give in,

rather remain where you are in the gospel of truth, stand fast, stand firm, that Pardon for sin is by faith in Christ alone.

Here is a battle term, a soldiers action, to dig the feet in the ground and know you have territory to protect, there is ground you cannot lose.

Therefore, believer be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, don't allow the world, the devil and the flesh, to push you back into surrendering gospel blessings.

Proverbs 23:23 ***“Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.”***

Remember, when King Ahab, a wicked and evil King, wanted Naboth to sell him his vineyard.

Naboth knew while I am responsible for guarding and tending to the vineyard, yet it is the Lord, and so he answered in **1 Kings 21:3** ***“The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.”*** Ahab made every attempt even put pressure on. Naboth's answer was the same, it is not for sale.

Citizens of Christ's kingdom, gospel truths are not for sale ***the faith of the gospel, is not for sale.***

Don't give them up, the preaching of the Word, the precious blood, the incarnation, salvation by Christ alone.

To the believers at Thessalonica, Paul said in **2 Thess 2:15** ***“Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.”*** The word traditions in this verse does not mean made man ideas rather is carries the idea of teaching handed down.

The same word is translated as ordinances in **1 Cor 11:2** **Paul said** ***“and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.”*** The meaning is **teaching handed down by the Lord**. It was a message with heaven's authority.

Don't bargain with them, don't try and come to an agreement, because once you dilute, and waver on biblical principles, biblical landmarks, you lose land, you lose ground, there will be no agreement.

once you give over that which had been given, once you sell what was bought for you, you will not get it back but will remain barren, a famine in your own soul.

In writing the saints at Philippi Paul said **stand fast for the faith of the gospel**.

What in relation to the faith of the gospel is under attack in your life believer, is it your marriage, seeking God together, attack upon your children filled with the world's philosophies and pleasures, your purity, attending church services, your work, your placed in hard situations. You feel the pressure.

As the saying goes, at times your feel like you're walking on thin ice, Rather, just remember, your walking on the word and standing on the promise of God that cannot fail.

What Biblical foundations are under attack in our nation, marriage, home, preserving life, way of salvation, the bible, the gospel itself.

God has decreed a day when He will judge by Christ all who stand against the gospel.

Until that day, believers, stand firm.

Call upon the name of the Lord. Plead the blood for there is victory to overcome every opposition through Jesus Christ until final judgment, **Ephesians 6:10** “***be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.***”

3 The continuation of the gospel citizens stand.

The words **stand fast** are also in the **continuous tense** meaning **keep standing firm, or continually hold ground.**

Paul was stating to the Philippians, as long as it takes, keep in standing. it's your duty and responsibility as gospel citizens to continually stand firm, until you finish the work, He calls you to do.

Until that time don't give up, cease not to pray, continue standing fast in gospel liberty.

Philippians 4:1 “***Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.***”

Remember, Nehemiah as he laboured among the Lord's people to rebuild the walls at Jerusalem, his oppressors wanted him to give up ground, stop the Lord's building program, to meet with them in compromising situations.

Nehemiah stood fast, he responded in **Nehemiah 6:3** ***And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?***

Nehemiah continued to stand fast to see the walls where built, completing the will of God for his life at that time.

You think of the life of Christ, He came as He said in **John 4:34** ***“to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work.***

During the last days, and hours leading to Calvary, the opposition keep coming, Christ continually stood firm.

As Christ was lifted up the cross, His opposers continually mocked Him. **Matthew 27:40** ***“...save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross,*** then again, **verse 42** ***“let Him now come down from the cross,*** but Christ continually stood firm, to provide salvation and earn victory for sinners He came to save.

Nehemiah words in the building Jerusalem's walls, can apply in their highest application in Christ's work on the cross, ***I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, (the work honouring God, redeeming sinners,) whilst I leave it, and come down to you?***

It's because Christ stayed on the cross, we are secured in heaven.

It's because Christ finished His saving work, eternal life is offered to you sinner, just now, look to Christ and be saved.

Believer, He's in heaven praying for us in our standing firm on earth.

Next time God willing we will consider:

II SECOND, THE GOSPEL CITIZENS STRIVE,