

1926 - YOUR MANNER of LIFE - Phil 1:27

PRELIMS. I **can identify** with Paul here, as I too have been wondering about you when away in New York! What was your *manner of life* like - how were you doing spiritually and with your walk with the Lord? Paul was saying in effect 'whether I am with you or **absent** I want to hear that you are **standing firm in one spirit with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel!**'

PAUL'S CONCERN

Paul was hoping that their walk and manner of life was indeed **worthy of the gospel of Christ**. He, himself was in **prison** when he wrote this - he wasn't likely going to see them again and his concern was 'Can they maintain their life of faith in Christ **without him** being present with them?' Story of the minister's cat - he was excellent, always obeyed commands - every time! That is - every time the minister was present! When he went on holiday, every rule was broken! With Xns it is the same!

It is amazing how **subconsciously** our behaviour is **conditioned by other people's presence and structures**. Not until we are truly tested can we be sure that our Xn behaviour is truly performed by our love and devotion to **X alone!** Eg, if there was no Lord's Day, do you honestly think you would spend an hour worshipping God? Morning & evening? When people and structures are removed, we must ask ourselves is there that **essential bond** which the Holy Spirit alone makes, in **uniting** us to X? *Salvation is being **united** to X! With reference to the **gospel** we read *the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith* (Heb 4:2) *if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His* (Rom 6:5)

Paul knew **human nature** - even as a **true believer**, he knew the **spiritual strength** required to worship God from the heart! After people profess faith, the Church has to **make** them **disciples!** And that involves effort and application with perseverance. It is regarding being a good servant of Jesus X, that Paul says *to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God* (1Tim 4:10). Whoever wrote Hebrews says *after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings* (Heb 10:32) and *In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood* (Heb 12:4) being a Xn is **not** a 'stroll in the park'!

But do **not** be **discouraged** that you have to **struggle** and **strive** against the world the flesh and the devil! All God's people have this struggle. **Remember** we are **more than conquerors through Him who loved us** (Rom 8:37) This is the same Paul who said *But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ* (1Cor 15:57) John: *Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world* (1John 4:4) *this is the victory that has overcome the world— our faith* (1John 5:4) Faith in what? Faith in Who?

The GOSPEL of CHRIST

My friends, our eternal salvation is not just a matter of faith - any faith - **only** faith in the **gospel of Christ**. We hear people say 'Just have faith' - but faith in what? Many times it is faith **in themselves!** 'Have faith that you can do it!' That is **fatal!** Xnity is **distinct** among religions/philosophies/psychologies! It is faith in what Jesus X has done **on the Cross** at Calvary! That **horrendous injustice**, was **no accident** of history - it was all **planned** by God, the Father of Jesus Christ before the world began! Jesus' death **accomplished salvation** in that His death was an **atonement** and **payment** to God for the sins of the world! His **resurrection** was **proof** He made that payment! Who can **create** life but God? Who can **restore** life but God? *Salvation is through **faith in that!**

The work of the Church is to **proclaim** the gospel - the gospel is the good news that Jesus died and rose again **for** the salvation of **all** those who believe in Him! Salvation is secured by belief in the **message** the Church has to give, which is Jesus died for our sins and rose again for our justification! And that Jesus is the Son of God and is Lord of all! **Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of**

God, God abides in him, and he in God (1John 4:15) *Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?* (1John 5:5) it is because of **who** Jesus is, and **what** Jesus did on the Cross that is **vital!** Do **you** believe it? It is **not** just faith in anything!

Just think of all the **evils** in the world, and all **injustices** in the world, **corruption** and **wickedness!** Is all that to 'go for nothing'? No justice? Those **falsely accused** and **imprisoned** of murder, rape, **human trafficking**, etc? People are falsely accused all the time! Is there to be no day of judgment? Of course there is! *The sins of some people are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others appear later. So also good works are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden* (1Tim 5:24) Each person will receive his reward - his due! No one will be **short-changed!** *So it is regarding their **faith** in the 'work', (life, death, resurrection) of Jesus Christ that Paul is concerned about and wants to know.....what.....?

STANDING FIRM

Are they **standing firm** in that faith? He enjoyed being with them - he had no doubt about their faith when he met them first - the **Jailor, Lydia, Slave girl!** Was the jailor just as **enthusiastic** and desirous that all his family would come to the faith? Was Lydia just as **hospitable** and **keen** for **fellowship** with the brethren? How was the Slave girl getting on without her means of support from her former owners? Did she *follow on to know the Lord* or did she defect?

How about **all the women** who had gathered that first day at the riverside when Paul met them when they were at prayer? (Acts 16) Were they **all growing** in grace and all being **conformed** to the image of Jesus X? As Xns they would have been persecuted in some small way at least! They certainly had **opponents**, Paul tells them not to be **frightened** of them (28)! If they resisted these opponents, then that was a *clear sign* of their **salvation** from God! (18) Hallelujah!

APP maybe you have opponents in your work-place, or even in your family! Stand firm! Be nice - even nicer! Hold on to your faith in X. Think of Him and what terrible **insults/injuries** He suffered on **our** behalf! *When He was reviled, He did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but continued entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly. He Himself bore our sins in His body.....that we.....might be saved and enjoy everlasting life....well, yes, but that is not what it says! ...might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed* (1Pet 2:13)

THEIR MANNER of LIFE

We need to be reminded of this - because if we really **enter into** the **significance** and **import** of what Jesus X did by His Life, death, resurrection, we will be much more readily, **able** and **willing**, to have a **manner of life** that is truly **worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ!** You see Paul's great concern is the *manner of life* these Philippians are living! The first word of our text is '**Monon**' from which we get mono! Paul says **Only**...this **one** concern troubles me...

We will never ever be able to have a manner of life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ, if we do not have the **heart** and the **grace**, and thereby be **willing**, to serve the Lord! We **cannot** have a **divided heart** and serve the Lord. We must have **one spirit and one mind** (27) *You cannot serve God and mammon!* Jesus: *Every kingdom divided against itself cannot stand* (Luke 11:17)

There is a place in **America** where you can stand and be in 2 different States at the one time! New Jersey, Delaware? Some Xns want to be like that! One foot in the Church and at the same time, one foot in the world! Many people want **this world** and **heaven!** We have to be careful, but that **could** mean these people have never really tasted the **true riches** of heaven!! Psalmist said 'Whom have I in the heavens high, but Thee O Lord alone! And on the **earth** whom I desire, beside Thee there is **none!** Heaven is so wonderful, there is **nothing** to be **compared** with it. We only get a **few tastes** of the heavenly state to whet our appetite and to help us persevere. **Indescribable joy!**